

COUNTY BOROUGH OF READING

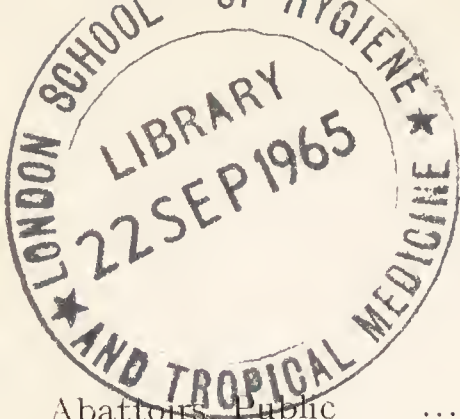
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1955



62493

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HEALTH COMMITTEE

December 31st, 1955

HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR (Councillor A. E. Smith)

Aldermen :

ARTHUR FRANK CLARK
ALFRED LOVELL

ALFRED HASLAM
LILIAN MARY MILLER (*Vice-Chairman*)
THOMAS STEPHEN WILLIAM SMART

Councillors :

WILLIAM JOHN ALLUM
ALICE JEANETTE BURROWS
JAMES CYRIL HARRY BUTCHER (*Chairman*)
CHARLES LANGFORD
EDITH MORRIS
HENRY GEORGE WHEELER

PERCY BELCHER
IRIS BOSIER BUTCHER
GEORGE GRIMSHAW HAMMOND
EDITH ELLA LOVETT
JAMES PHILLIP WALLACE
JOHN STANLEY WOODROW

Non-Members of the Council :

NANCY A. SHARP
EDWARD BASIL BERRY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
CLAUD VERITY GLEDHILL, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
CYRIL FRANCIS WRIGHT, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
H. WILLIAMS, M.P.S.

STAFF AT DECEMBER 31st, 1955

Medical Officer of Health :

E. HUGHES, M.D., D.P.H., D.P.A.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health :

G. M. O'DONNELL, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

Assistant Medical Officers of Health and Assistant School Medical Officers :

VIOLET FRASER, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

ETHEL A. FISHER, M.B., B.Ch., D.R.C.O.G.

ELIZABETH M. SEFTON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.C.H., L.M. (Rotunda)

WILLIAM T. JONES, M.B., B.Ch., D.P.H., D.C.H.

Medical Officers (Part-time) Maternity and Child Welfare :

A. J. H. HARDY, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.O.G.

P. W. F. McILVENNA, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., L.R.F.P.S.

Public Analyst :

T. McLACHLAN, A.C.G.F.C., F.I.C.

Chief Sanitary Inspector :

J. GREEN, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector :

H. SYRAD, M.S.I.A.

Sanitary Inspectors :

R. W. BASHFORD (commenced 2nd March, 1955)

D. V. C. COOPER (commenced 24th October, 1955)

D. T. LEWIS

P. McCANDLISH

M. CARTER (commenced 3rd March, 1955)

D. BROOK (commenced 24th October, 1955)

H. MORTIMORE

W. C. WAGG (commenced 7th November, 1955)

Superintendent Health Visitor and Non-Medical Supervisor of Midwives :

Miss E. V. LEE

Health Visitors :

*Miss H. A. MORTIMER

*Miss M. J. LOMAS

*Miss F. CLARK

*Miss M. J. M. WILLIAMSON

Miss P. K. HART

Miss M. V. PALMER (commenced 12th Sept., 1955)

*Miss R. M. UPTON

*Miss R. BROMLEY

*Miss O. M. JARVIS

Mrs. A. ALLISON (commenced 1st April, 1955)

*Miss B. O. BRUNDLE (commenced 8th August, 1955)

Mrs. KINGSLEY (part-time)

*Combined Health Visitor and School Nurse

Tuberculosis Visitors :

Miss E. V. GAGGIOTTI

Mrs. L. E. MEDWAY

Tuberculosis Welfare Officer :

Miss B. I. HARTLEY (commenced 1st October, 1955)

Family Caseworkers :

Miss A. ROSS

Miss N. D. R. CALVELEY (commenced 1st August, 1955)

Municipal Midwives :

Miss E. J. ODELL

Mrs. R. M. TEAL

Miss V. GARRIGAN

Mrs. Y. M. TROTTIER

Premature Baby Nurse :

Miss S. K. BARRACK, S.C.M.

Mental Deficiency Officer :

Miss J. M. ROBB

Psychiatric Welfare Officer :

F. B. MARTIN

Duly Authorised Officers :

C. E. HOUSE

D. H. COMERFORD (relief)

Miss J. M. ROBB (relief)

Chief Clerk :

C. I. AUST

Domestic Help Service :

(Assistant Organisers)

Mrs. D. M. JONES

Mrs. H. A. FINCH

Occupation Centre :

Miss E. M. BARKAS (Supervisor)

Superintendent, Queen Victoria Institute :

Miss A. M. HINKSMAN

Day Nurseries:*Holybrook House* : Mrs. M. MORRIS (Matron)*Victoria Square* : Mrs. B. GELL (Matron)**Blind Welfare Officer :**

Miss M. L. LOWE

Home Teachers for the Blind :

Miss A. E. SMITH

Mrs. M. E. P. HODGE

Administrative Officer for the Purposes of the National Assistance Act, 1948 :

G. E. TURNBULL

Administrative Assistant for the Purposes of the National Assistance Act, 1948

D. H. COMERFORD

“ Woodlands ” Old People’s Home :

G. HOGG (Superintendent)

Mrs. H. M. HOGG (Matron)

“ Wychcotes ” and “ Warren House ” Old People’s Homes :

Mrs. E. J. ABLETT (Matron)

“ Parkhurst ” Old People’s Home :

Mrs. F. B. McADAM (Superintendent) (commenced 1st May, 1955)

“ Southern Hill ” Old People’s Home :

W. J. HOLLAND (Superintendent)

“ Arthur Clark ” Home, 3 Albert Road :

Mrs. E. A. CHANDLER (Attendant in Charge)

Welfare Officer (“ Other Handicapped Persons ”)

Mrs. J. D. SNOW (commenced 24th May, 1955)

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S DEPARTMENT,
TOWN HALL,
READING.

To the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to present my Annual Report for 1955.

The vital statistics for the year correspond very closely with those of the country as a whole and can be regarded as satisfactory.

Various aspects of the Department's work are dealt with in some detail in the body of the Report and do not call for further comment in this introduction.

Shortage of staff has been a continual source of worry during the course of the year. I do not wish to labour this matter of staff for it is not confined to the Health Department and I must thank the Committee for the understanding manner in which they have accepted the position and supported efforts to recruit further staff. But I am afraid that continual shortage does mean that we have had to deal with our work on rather a hand to mouth basis and it is extremely difficult to carry out, or in some cases to formulate any long term plans.

In February, 1956, we were sorry to say good-bye to Miss E. V. Lee who had served the Council faithfully since 1931. Her first appointment with us was as a Health Visitor in 1931 and in 1941

she was promoted to Superintendent Health Visitor and Non-Medical Supervisor of Midwives. She saw many changes in the department during her period of service and we wish her well in her retirement.

I must, however, record the fact that my task has been made easier by the loyal and cheerful support given to me by such staff as there is. It is also a pleasure to record the continued good relations with the medical and non-medical staff of the Reading and District Hospital Management Committee and general practitioners and officers of the Local Executive Council. I think one can truly say that in Reading liaison is good between the various sections of the Health Service.

Last, but not least, I would like to express my appreciation of the support which has been given to me by all members of the Committee.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

E. HUGHES,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

								1955	1954
Area (acres)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9,106	9,106
Population (estimated June, 1955)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	118,100	118,300
Area Comparability Factor—									
Births	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.01	1.01
Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.91	0.91
Number of inhabited houses according to rate books at									
31.12.55	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	32,918	32,310
Rateable Value (31.12.55)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£1,211,497	£1,184,276
Product of a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£4,844	£4,767
Total cost of Services administered by the Health Committee and the Welfare Services Sub-Committee of the Education Committee for the year ended March 31st, 1955 :—									
Expenditure	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£241,563	£240,627
Income	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£60,568	£53,954

Number of women dying in or in consequence of childbirth :—

From sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	(—)
From other causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	(1)
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	(1)
Maternal Mortality Rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	(.58)
Deaths from cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	...	223	(249)
Deaths from measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	(—)
Deaths from whooping cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	(—)
Deaths from diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	(2)

Tuberculosis deaths :—

Pulmonary	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	(6)
Non-pulmonary	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	(2)
All forms	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	(8)

Tuberculosis death rate (per 1,000 population) :—

Pulmonary	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.05	(0.05)
Non-pulmonary	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.01	(0.02)
All forms	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.06	(0.07)

Comparison of Vital Statistics for Reading with those for other Areas

	Reading	England and Wales
Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population—		
Births—		
Live births	14.35	15.00
Still births per 1,000 total births	23.00	23.10
Deaths—		
All causes	11.5	11.7
Rates per 1,000 Live Births—		
Deaths—		
All causes under 1 year of age	23.60	24.9

METEOROLOGICAL REPORT, 1955

MONTH	Rainfall and Temperature as Recorded at Forbury Gardens						Sunshine Hours as Recorded at Sutton's Seed Trial Grounds		
	Rainfall in inches	Temperature				Mean Humidity*	Monthly Aggregate of Sunshine Hours	Daily Mean Sunshine Hours	Daily Mean expressed as a percentage of Possible Sunshine
		Maximum	Minimum	Mean Maximum	Mean Minimum				
January ...	2.53	54	18	41.81	31.65	92.68	33.3	1.07	13
February ...	1.21	54	20	41.71	30.18	89.11	79.7	2.85	29
March ...	.9	62	23	47	31.35	87.52	158.1	5.10	43
April ...	.3	68	29	60	41	80.4	173.1	5.77	42
May ...	4.4	74	35	60.74	43.35	77.94	199.4	6.43	41
June ...	2.23	78	38	69.33	50.77	82.53	170.8	5.69	34
July ...	.22	91	48	78.19	55.52	82.42	255.0	8.23	51
August ...	.54	92	42	78.52	56.16	84.84	196.8	6.35	44
September ...	1.86	81	38	69.93	48.33	87.23	149.0	4.97	39
October ...	2.74	72	26	58.48	40.19	87.42	109.7	3.54	33
November ...	1.78	63	25	51.73	38.1	91.8	55.8	1.86	21
December ...	2.28	57	23	48.84	32.65	92.23	36.8	1.19	15
	20.99								

* As recorded at 9.0 a.m. daily

ANALYSIS OF DEATHS ACCORDING TO RESIDENCE, ETC.

										Male	Female
SEX	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	674	678
SOCIAL GROUP—											
I	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	26	26
II	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	97	119
III	<i>a</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
	<i>b</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	35	22
	<i>c</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	31	24
	<i>d</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30	26
	<i>e</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	241	222
IV	<i>a</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24	20
	<i>b</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	48	70
V	<i>a</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	23	15
	<i>b</i>	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	111	95
No Occupation		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	38
INDUSTRIAL STATUS. (1)—											
Employers		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	28	23
Managers		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Branch Managers		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Managers of Offices, etc.		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Own Account		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	61	58
Operative		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	579	559
Apprentice		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Part-time		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Unpaid Family Worker		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Out of Work		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
No Occupation		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	38
INDUSTRIAL STATUS. (2)—											
Retired		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	429	87
Not Applicable		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	218	50
Housewife		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	175
Widow		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	344
Dependant Child		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	27	22
ELECTORIAL WARD—											
Abbey		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15	10
Battle		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	54	45
Castle		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21	32
Caversham East		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	41	35
Caversham West		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	54	60
Church		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	125	112
East		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	68	97
Katesgrove		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	54	43
Minster		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	15	25
Redlands		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	28	37
Tilehurst		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	108	84
Victoria		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	42	23
West		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	49	75
PLACE OF DEATH—											
Own Home		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	339	395
Royal Berks Hospital		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	82	52
Battle Hospital		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	75	96
Other Chronic Sick Hospital		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	123	98
Sanatorium		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
Mental Hospital		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Part III Accommodation		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
Nursing Home		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	8
Maternity Home...		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	3
Other		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	40	25
ADDRESS AT DEATH—											
Inside Borough		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	572	603
Outside Borough		...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	102	75

Employment. I am indebted to the Manager of the Employment Exchange for the following information :—

The latest available estimate of the number of insured workers in Reading is approximately 58,000 at June, 1954. They are employed in a wide variety of industries of which the main ones are :—

Agriculture (including seed production)
 Biscuit Manufacture
 Brewing and Malting
 Building
 Distributive Trades
 Engineering (including Aircraft, Metal Goods, and
 Vehicle Manufacture)
 Furniture and Shop Fittings
 Government Service (National and Local)
 Hotel and Catering
 Printing and Publishing
 Tailoring
 Transport (Road and Rail)

There is a general shortage of labour in the area. The number of unfilled vacancies fell slightly in the last few months of the year due chiefly to seasonal causes but remains approximately four times the number of unemployed. The totals of unfilled vacancies for men and women at the end of each quarter in 1955, were :—

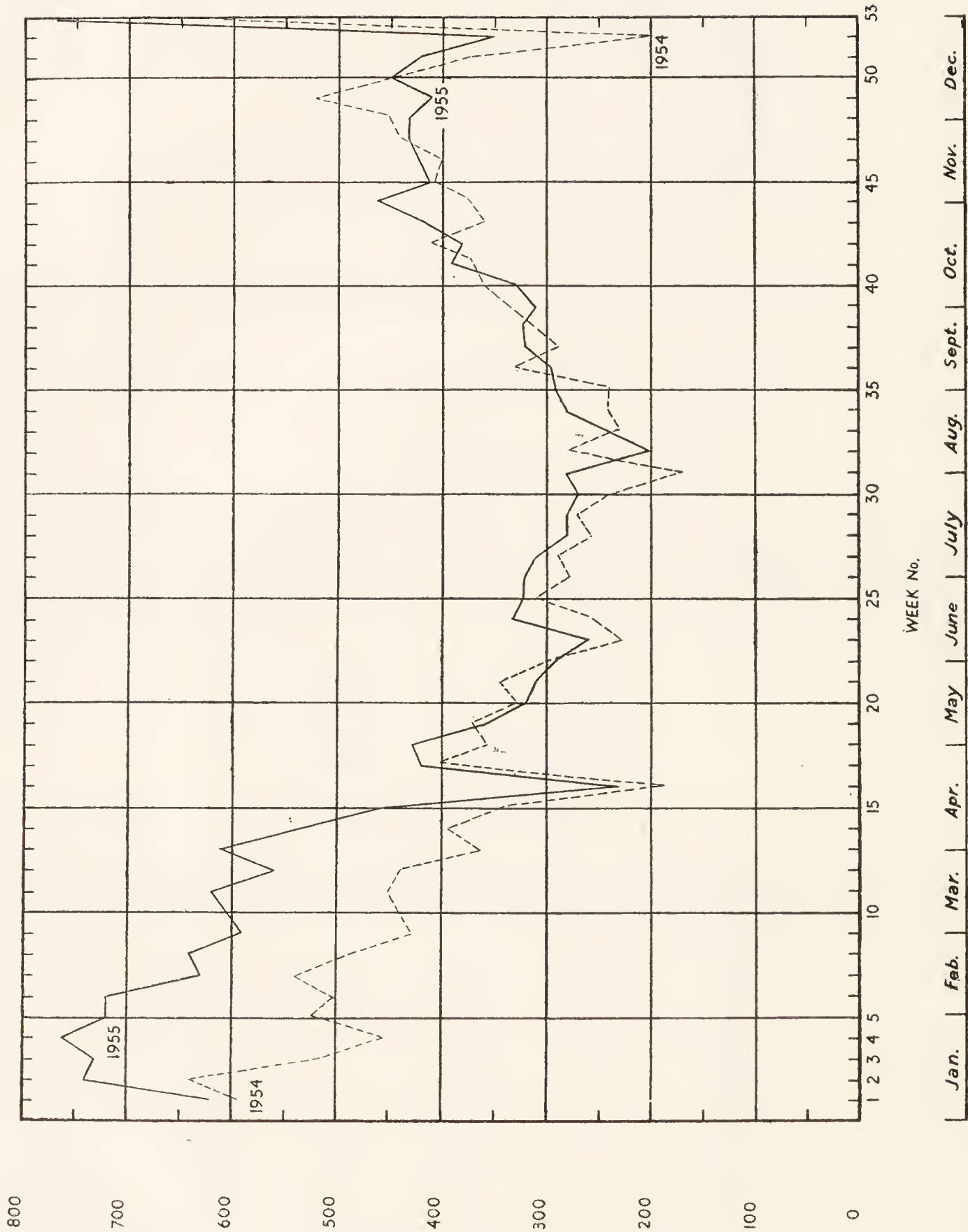
March	...	1,000
June	...	1,250
September	...	1,000
December	...	800

Numbers of persons registered as unemployed in the quarter months of 1955 are given below; they show a very satisfactory decline and also compare very favourably with figures for previous years :—

<i>Date</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Previous years'</i> <i>totals for Comparison</i>	
						1954	1953
March	215	104	19	6	344	518	681
June	155	128	7	5	295	422	513
Sept.	153	96	14	19	282	406	561
Dec.	136	85	20	5	246	334	443

Unemployment is of very short duration for the majority but the exception is the elderly disabled person, who is sometimes unemployed for a longer period. The percentage of workpeople unemployed in Reading is well below the national average.

NUMBER OF NEW CLAIMS FOR SICKNESS BENEFIT PER WEEK, 1955
(Ministry of National Insurance Returns)



CAUSES AND AGES AT DEATH. (Registrar-General's Return)

CAUSES OF DEATH	All ages	All ages		0-1		1-4		5-14		15-24		25-44		45-64		65-74		75 and Over	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1—Tuberculosis (respiratory) ..	5	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	3	—	—	—
2—Tuberculosis (other) ..	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
3—Syphilitic disease ..	7	5	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	3	1
4—Diphtheria ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—Whooping Cough ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6—Meningococcal Infections ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
7—Acute Poliomyelitis ..	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
8—Measles ..	1	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
9—Other infective and parasitic diseases ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10—Malignant neoplasm, Stomach ..	32	23	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	2	11	2	6	5
11— " Lung, bronchus ..	41	36	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	24	3	8	1	2	1
12— " Breast ..	17	—	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	2	2	—	4	4
13— " Uterus ..	14	—	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	4	—	4	4
14—Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ..	121	63	58	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	20	21	23	13	19	22
15—Leukaemia, aleukaemia ..	4	3	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
16—Diabetes ..	10	1	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	8
17—Vascular lesions of nervous system ..	226	91	135	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	16	19	26	37	48	79
18—Coronary disease, angina ..	166	96	70	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	32	8	35	19	25	43
19—Hypertension with heart disease ..	27	17	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	2	7	3	7	5
20—Other heart disease ..	214	95	119	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	2	8	10	17	24	67	83
21—Other circulatory disease ..	89	39	50	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	5	3	7	5	7	8	19	34
22—Influenza ..	4	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	2
23—Pneumonia ..	93	44	49	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	2	3	11	9	11	10	14	24
24—Bronchitis ..	61	38	23	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	8	3	15	5	13	15
25—Other diseases of respiratory system ..	12	10	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	2	4	—	2	—
26—Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ..	10	6	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	—	—	4	3
27—Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ..	2	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
28—Nephritis and nephrosis ..	7	2	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	1	—	3
29—Hyperplasia of prostate ..	11	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	6	—
30—Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
31—Congenital malformations ..	12	5	7	3	5	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
32—Other defined and ill-defined diseases ..	107	43	64	11	12	1	—	—	—	2	2	1	3	7	12	11	13	10	22
33—Motor vehicle accidents ..	17	14	3	—	—	1	—	—	—	4	—	3	1	5	1	1	1	—	—
34—All other accidents ..	29	16	13	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	2	4	—	3	—	4	10
35—Suicide ..	16	9	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	5	3	2	—	—
36—Homicide and operation of war ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS ..	1358	676	682	22	18	3	1	4	3	12	3	25	20	166	120	194	148	250	369
		1358		40		4		7		15		45		286		342		619	

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT, 1946

(A) GENERAL

There have been no material changes in the administration of the Department or of the Committee duties since the matter was fully reported in my report for 1952.

(B) PARTICULAR SERVICES

SECTION 21—PROVISION OF HEALTH CENTRES

No steps have been taken to provide health centres in accordance with Section 21 of the Act. The new welfare clinic on the Southcote Housing Estate, although not strictly a health centre within the meaning of Section 21, continued to work satisfactorily throughout the year. The house which was built specially for a general practitioner on the same estate was completed and occupied during the year. Steps are being taken to provide a new infant welfare clinic to serve the new housing estate at St. Michael's, Tilehurst.

SECTION 22—CARE OF EXPECTANT AND NURSING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN UNDER SCHOOL AGE

(a) *Infant Mortality and Stillbirths*

It will be seen that the infantile mortality rate for the year was 23·60 per thousand live births and the neo-natal mortality rate was 15·93. The stillbirth rate was 23·00 per thousand total births. In recent years there has been a tendency to group stillbirths and deaths in the first week of life together under the heading of Perinatal mortality.

The following give the figures for the last few years :—

	I.M.R.	S.B.R.	P.N.R.
1948	34.6	24.76	41.90
1949	26.2	21.42	36.57
1950	26.1	22.75	38.84
1951	28.95	20.19	34.91
1952	23.19	26.52	34.98
1953	19.70	22.75	32.67
1954	29.20	17.28	33.39
1955	23.60	23.00	37.48

The table on page 18 gives particulars of the infantile mortality rate for the last fifty years. The table on page 35 gives the causes of death during the first year of life.

b) *Ante-natal Clinics*

The decrease in attendance at medical sessions continued throughout the year. The session at Southcote Clinic and one session at Whitley Clinic were suspended although it must always be remembered that the bulk of the ante-natal work is carried out by general practitioners at their own surgeries. The scheme for interchange of information between midwives and practitioners continued throughout the year and, on the whole, functioned satisfactorily. I think it can be truthfully said that the main functions of the medical sessions at ante-natal clinics at present is the minor, but extremely useful one, of taking samples of blood on behalf of general practitioners for examination at a laboratory.

Midwives' sessions continued to flourish and are held as follows :—

Star Lane	Monday afternoons
	Friday afternoons (for Q.V.I.)
	Saturday afternoons (ante-natal exercises)
Southcote	Tuesday afternoons
Whitley	Alternate Thursday afternoons

The following table gives particulars of the attendances throughout the year at the medical sessions.

Clinic	Number of Sessions held	Ante-natal		Post-natal
		New Patients	Re-attendances	
Star Lane ...	52	10	20	4
Whitley ...	48	54	278	33
Southcote ...	4	—	—	1
Total ...	104	64	298	38

The attendance at midwives' sessions were as follows :—

	No of Sessions held	New Patients	Reattendances
Star Lane	48	91	578
Whitley	24	30	116
Southcote	51	57	310
Total	123	178	1,004

SUMMARY OF INFANT AND MATERNAL MORTALITY RATES SINCE 1906

Year	Population	No. of Births	Birth-rate per 1,000 Living	No. of Infant Deaths	Infant Mortality	Maternal Mortality			Total No. of Deaths	Death-rate per 1,000 Living
						Sepsis	Others	Rate per 1,000 Births		
1906	79,559	1,882	23.66	217	115.3	4	6	5.3	1,016	12.77
1907	81,040	1,806	22.28	164	90.8	4	8	6.6	983	12.13
1908	82,549	1,847	22.37	182	98.5	1	4	2.7	963	11.66
1909	84,085	1,744	20.74	166	95.2	4	4	4.6	962	11.44
1910	84,355	1,673	19.83	126	75.3	3	4	4.2	844	10.00
1911	87,693	1,605	21.32	164	102.2	5	3	4.9	911	12.10
1912	88,603	1,896	21.40	160	84.4	3	3	3.2	1,015	11.45
1913	89,339	1,871	20.94	150	80.2	4	4	4.3	1,035	11.58
1914	90,083	1,819	20.19	161	88.5	1	6	3.9	1,082	12.01
1915	86,299	1,792	19.89	147	82.0	3	3	3.4	1,199	13.89
1916	92,563	1,794	19.38	145	80.8	4	—	2.2	1,230	14.46
1917	91,936	1,420	15.44	140	98.6	3	4	4.9	1,172	14.21
1918	92,320	1,582	17.14	115	72.7	3	4	4.4	1,317	15.98
1919	95,175	1,593	16.7	109	68.4	1	3	2.5	1,091	11.9
1920	95,387	2,278	24.8	152	66.7	4	7	3.9	1,016	11.04
1921	92,274	1,892	20.4	114	60.2	—	1	0.5	1,069	10.7
1922	92,990	1,729	18.5	109	63.04	—	2	1.16	1,135	12.2
1923	93,160	1,705	18.3	88	51.6	3	8	6.4	1,036	11.12
1924	93,680	1,603	17.1	86	53.6	—	5	3.1	1,006	10.7
1925	93,910	1,509	16.07	85	56.3	2	5	4.6	1,042	11.12
1926	93,290	1,624	17.6	83	50.5	4	1	3.0	1,139	12.2
1927	94,890	1,456	15.3	62	42.5	1	2	2.0	1,165	12.3
1928	97,190	1,489	15.48	80	53.6	4	6	6.7	1,147	11.9
1929	97,050	1,446	14.9	75	50.5	1	3	2.8	1,373	14.1
1930	97,050	1,404	14.4	77	54.8	—	3	2.1	1,114	11.4
1931	97,149	1,477	15.1	66	44.6	1	3	2.7	1,169	12.0
1932	97,636	1,396	14.3	77	55.2	1	5	4.29	1,253	12.8
1933	98,950	1,380	13.9	87	63.0	1	4	2.9	1,370	13.6
1934	99,250	1,414	14.25	58	41.02	3	1	2.8	1,183	11.9
1935	99,600	1,475	14.8	76	51.5	2	1	1.9	1,230	12.3
1936	100,000	1,436	14.3	73	51.0	1	2	2.1	1,275	12.8
1937	100,200	1,581	15.8	79	49.7	—	3	1.8	1,306	13.0
1938	100,400	1,582	15.7	60	39.9	1	6	4.4	1,259	12.5
1939	100,600	1,564	15.5	79	50.5	1	5	3.9	1,327	13.2
1940	114,600	1,725	15.0	88	51.0	—	1	0.5	1,606	14.1
1941	124,800	1,913	15.3	113	59.0	2	5	3.7	1,532	12.2
1942	117,800	1,833	15.0	70	38.2	1	1	1.1	1,298	11.0
1943	113,000	1,925	17.03	83	43.1	1	4	2.6	1,385	12.2
1944	111,340	2,139	19.2	87	40.7	—	4	1.8	1,311	12.0
1945	108,830	2,066	18.8	98	47.4	1	3	1.9	1,400	12.8
1946	111,340	2,226	20.0	98	44.0	—	2	0.89	1,382	12.4
1947	112,960	2,533	22.4	89	35.1	—	2	0.77	1,395	12.3
1948	114,500	2,100	17.88	71	34.6	2	2	1.9	1,311	11.45
1949	115,500	1,873	16.26	47	26.2	—	1	0.52	1,260	10.93
1950	115,770	1,761	15.21	46	26.1	—	—	—	1,344	11.61
1951	115,100	1,833	15.93	52	28.95	—	1	0.55	1,402	12.18
1952	115,800	1,772	15.30	40	23.19	—	—	—	1,285	11.09
1953	117,700	1,714	14.56	33	19.70	—	3	1.75	1,255	10.66
1954	118,300	1,678	14.18	49	29.20	—	1	0.58	1,246	10.53
1955	118,100	1,695	14.35	40	23.60	—	—	—	1,358	11.5

Arrangements continue for the use of maternity outfits of an approved pattern for all mothers who are to be confined at home.

Blood Tests. Our practice of performing venepuncture for the purpose of carrying out blood tests for Rhesus Factor and Kahn Tests for general practitioners has continued.

The following table gives particulars :—

Blood tests on—

Clinic patients at Star Lane	...	...	...	...	10
General practitioner patients at Star Lane	...	...	...	...	715
Clinic patients at Whitley	...	...	...	...	64
General practitioner patients at Whitley	...	...	...	...	94
Clinic patients at Southcote	...	...	...	...	Nil
General practitioner patients at Southcote	...	...	...	...	10

Post-natal Clinics. There are no special sessions for post-natal examinations ; the work is carried out at the end of the ante-natal session under the arrangements outlined in previous reports. During the year 38 women attended municipal clinics for post-natal examination.

Care of Unmarried Mothers and Children. This work continues to be carried out in collaboration with the Reading and Bradfield Association for Moral Welfare and other agencies ; if necessary, cases can be dealt with by the Department's own staff. We have also collaborated closely with the Children's Officer, more especially where there was any question of adoption or fostering of the child when the mother was ready to resume work.

The welfare worker of this Association has been good enough to supply the following information :—

“ In addition to the 87 new cases involving illegitimate children and their parents, 22 other new cases concerned with other problems were dealt with during the year.

There were 457 interviews at St. Mary's Gate and 513 home visits were paid, these include persons from the Bradfield Deanery as well as those from Reading Borough.

One thousand and five letters were received and 1,207 were written.

Several mothers are helped by monthly grants in aid from Dr. Barnardo's Homes towards the maintenance of their children.

Through the kindness of friends who have made gifts of baby clothes, maternity clothes, cots and prams it has been possible to help a number of girls who were in need of these things.

It has been encouraging to see how many girls have been able to take their babies into their own homes.

The girls who have been to Mother and Baby Homes have benefited by their stay and most of them are appreciative of the help offered to them through the medium of the Homes.”

	<i>Annual Record of Cases</i>				<i>New</i>	<i>Old</i>	<i>Total</i>
(A) Involving illegitimate children and their parents	87	31	118

**Ages of Mothers on referral*

14 and under	...	...	—
15	...	...	1
16	...	...	1
17	...	...	7
18 and over	...	...	78

**Domicile (Mothers)*

Home in area	...	...	74
Home elsewhere	...	...	13

**Marital Status (Mothers)*

Single	...	...	...	77
Married	...	...	...	3
Widowed	...	...	...	2
Divorced	...	...	...	5

**Nationality (Mothers)*

British Isles	...	...	...	82
Commonwealth	...	...	...	1
U.S.A.	...	...	...	—
Others	...	...	...	4

**Marital Status (Putative Fathers)*

Single	...	...	...	55
Married	...	...	...	28
Widowed	...	...	...	1
Divorced	...	...	...	3

**Nationality (P.F.)*

British Isles	...	...	...	70
Commonwealth	...	...	...	1
U.S.A.	...	...	...	14
Others	...	...	...	2

†Details of Maternity Cases (A) above—

Children in care of mother (at home, in family, with her in post, etc.)	33+20
Children in touch with mother (fostered, nursery, etc.)	3+1
Children taken into care by L.A.	2+1
Children taken by Voluntary Societies	1+1
Children adopted or placed for adoption	16+8
Mothers placed in Voluntary Homes	21+15
Mothers placed in L.A. Homes, Burnell House	1
Mothers with child still in Home	5
No. of Maintenance grants from L.A.	25+14

**New Cases only*

†Current cases, new and old, on which any work has been done during this year.

Summary of New Cases for 1955—

Children in care of mother	...	...	...	33
„ „ touch with mother	...	...	...	3
„ taken into c/o L.A.	...	...	...	2
„ „ by Vol. Societies	...	...	...	1
„ placed for adoption	...	...	...	16
Mothers with children still in Home	...	...	...	5
„ moved before birth of child	...	...	...	3
Babies died, stillborn, miscarriage, etc.	...	...	...	4
„ not yet born	...	...	...	20
				—
				87
				—

Infant Welfare Clinics. During the year an additional session was started at Tilehurst, and the Friday morning session at Star Lane was transferred to Tuesday afternoon. It is estimated that 87% of children born during the year attended these clinics at least once during 1955.

The following table gives a summary of the attendances at the clinics during the year :—

INFANT WELFARE CLINICS

Centre	No. of Sessions	New attendances under 1 year	Total attendances	Average Attendances
St. Mary Magdalen, Oxford Road, Reading— Tuesday p.m.	50	82	2,793	55
Elm Park Hall, Oxford Road, Reading— Tuesday a.m.	50	40	1,199	23
Tuesday p.m.	51	98	2,816	55
Thursday p.m.	51	99	2,434	47
Tilehurst Village Hall, Tilehurst— Monday p.m.	46	89	2,753	59
Thursday, p.m.	26	18	625	24
Star Lane, London Street, Reading— Tuesday p.m.	38	74	2,228	58
Wednesday p.m.	39	114	2,255	57
Friday a.m.	21	29	666	31
Whitley Clinic— Wednesday p.m.	51	114	2,904	56
Friday p.m.	49	111	2,325	47
Tynedale Free Church Hall, Shinfield— Thursday p.m.	51	90	2,461	48
West Memorial Institute, Caversham— Tuesday p.m.	50	79	1,629	32
Thursday p.m.	51	115	2,253	44
Park Institute, Wokingham Road, Reading— Monday p.m.	47	106	2,963	63
Friday p.m.	49	113	3,100	63
St. Barnabas' Hall, Emmer Green Wednesday (alt.) p.m.	24	26	579	24
Southcote Clinic— Wednesday p.m.	51	62	1,787	35
Friday p.m.	50	37	1,335	26
Totals	845	1,496	39,105	46

Welfare Foods. Arrangements continued to work satisfactorily for the distribution of welfare foods. One Supervisor is responsible for the ordering and issue of supplies of Ministry of Health and proprietary brands of welfare foods. He is assisted by two part-time assistants at the central depot, a storekeeper, part-time clerks employed on a sessional basis at certain clinics, and whole-time clerks from the central office who attend certain of the other clinic sessions. During 1955 we distributed the following from the main depot, 22 The Forbury :—

National Dried Milk Half Cream (20-oz. tin)	701
National Dried Milk Full Cream (20-oz. tin)	26,732
Orange Juice (bottles)	61,013
Cod Liver Oil Compound (bottles)	8,180
Vitamin Capsules (packets)	4,726

In addition, we distributed a large amount of dried milk, etc., from the clinics themselves. The following figures relate to the main items distributed from these clinics during the year and are in addition to the preceding :—

National Dried Milk Half Cream (20-oz. tin)	203
Proprietary brands of Dried Milk Half Cream (16-oz. packets) ...	1,406
National Dried Milk Full Cream (20-oz. tin)	16,497
Proprietary brands of Dried Milk Full Cream (16-oz. packets) ...	22,964
Ministry of Food Orange Juice (bottles)	52,694
Proprietary Brands of Fruit Juice (bottles)	3,614
Ministry of Food Cod Liver Oil Compound (bottles)	8,337
Proprietary Cod Liver Oil Preparations (1-lb. cartons)	62
Ministry of Food Vitamin Capsules (packets)	2,590
Proprietary brands of Vitamin Preparations (8 c.c. bottles of Adexolin)	5,424

Women's Advisory Clinic. Arrangements continued as previously ; the morning session is justifying itself.

2,631 patients attended the clinic
1,616 were examined by the doctor
471 were new patients

Care of Premature Infants. This service continued to work smoothly and efficiently during the year and I am sure that the appointment of a special nurse for this work has more than justified itself. Once again, I wish to express my thanks to the staff of the Premature Baby Unit at Battle Hospital for their continued support and co-operation. Our record in respect of premature babies continues to be a good one. In 1955, 35.2% of all confinements took place at home, 14% of all premature births took place in their own homes. The twenty-eight day survival rate for premature babies of all weights who were born at home was 100% and for all weights born in hospital, nursing homes, and in their own homes, was 85%.

Altogether 103 cases were under the supervision of the Premature Baby Nurse.

Sixty-two infants were transferred from hospital to her care and all were discharged in a satisfactory condition to the Health Visitor ; 27 babies were discharged from nursing homes (including H.M.C. Nursing Homes) ; all these were discharged as normal and well into the Health Visitors' care ; 14 infants were born at home and nursed entirely at home ; all these were discharged as normal and well into the Health Visitors' care. With the help of the Health Visitors we have attempted to carry out the follow-up of the development of premature babies who have been born since 1953. The attached table gives particulars :—

Weight at birth (1)	PREMATURE LIVE BIRTHS															PREMATURE STILLBIRTHS		
	Born in Hospital *			Born at home and nursed entirely at home			Born at home and transferred to hospital on or before 28th day			Born in nursing home and nursed entirely there			Born in nursing home and transferred to hospital on or before 28th day			Born in hospital	Born at home	Born in nursing home
	Total (2)	Died within 24 hrs. of birth (3)	Survived 28 days (4)	Total (5)	Died within 24 hrs. of birth (6)	Survived 28 days (7)	Total (8)	Died within 24 hrs. of birth (9)	Survived 28 days (10)	Total (11)	Died within 24 hrs. of birth (12)	Survived 28 days (13)	Total (14)	Died within 24 hrs. of birth (15)	Survived 28 days (16)	Born in hospital (17)	Born at home (18)	Born in nursing home (19)
(a) 3-lb. 4-oz. or less (1,500 gms. or less)	17	7	10	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9	2	—
(b) Over 3-lb. 4-oz. up to and including 4-lb. 6-oz. (1,500-2,000 gms.)	14	3	11	—	—	—	4	2	2	5	—	5	2	1	1	1	1	—
(c) Over 4-lb. 6-oz. up to and including 4-lb. 15-oz. (2,000-2,250 gms.)	14	—	14	1	—	1	2	—	2	8	1	7	—	—	—	2	—	—
(d) Over 4-lb. 15-oz. up to and including 5-lb. 8-oz. (2,250-2,500 gms.)	26	1	24	12	—	12	—	—	—	15	—	14	—	—	—	1	1	2
Totals ..	71	11	59	13	—	13	7	3	4	28	1	26	2	1	1	13	4	2

* The Group under this heading will include cases which may be born in one hospital and transferred to another

Born February to December, 1953

REPORT AT SIX MONTHS

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Ht./Wt.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	10	6	9	10	4	1	—	1 below average physically congenital cataract 1 spastic 1 below weight with facial paralysis
Group B	13	9	12	12	4	1	—	
Group C	13	11	13	13	2	—	—	
Group D	34	32	33	34	2	1	—	

REPORT AT ONE YEAR

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Ht./Wt.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	10	8	9	10	2	1	—	Congenital cataract
Group B	13	12	12	12	1	1	—	1 spastic
Group C	13	13	13	—	—	—	—	
Group D	34	33	34	34	1	—	—	1 lymphangioma awaiting treatment

REPORT AT TWO YEARS

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Ht./Wt.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	10	8	9	10	2	1	—	Congenital cataract. for operation
Group B	12	12	11	11	—	1	—	Spastic
Group C	13	13	—	Normal	in every way			
Group D	33	33	—	Normal	in every way			Lymphangioma for operation

Born January to December, 1954

REPORT AT SIX MONTHS

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Ht./Wt.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	6	2	6	6	4	—	—	
Group B	27	15	26	26	12	1	1	1 mongol
Group C	17	12	17	17	5	—	—	
Group D	49	35	47	47	14	2	—	1 mongol 1 skeletal abnormalities of face

REPORT AT ONE YEAR

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Ht./Wt.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	6	3	5	5	3	1	1	1 mongol
Group B	27	20	26	26	7	1	1	1 mongol
Group C	17	14	17	17	3	—	—	
Group D	49	40	47	47	9	2	—	1 mongol 1 with skeletal abnormalities

Born January to June, 1955

REPORT AT SIX MONTHS

	Total	Average Wt./Ht.	Average Physical Develop.	Average Mental Develop.	Below Average Ht./Wt.	Below Average Physically	Below Average Mentally	Remarks
Group A	6	4	5	6	2	1	—	1 with poor sight
Group B	8	6	8	8	2	—	—	
Group C	15	11	14	15	4	1	—	1 enlarged thymus
Group D	25	20	25	25	5	—	—	

Day Nurseries. Our general policy in respect of the selection of children for admission to day nurseries continued, viz. we only admit children whose mothers

have to go out to work for some reason or other or where there is temporary illness in the home.

Holybrook House. There are no special items to report about this particular nursery. We have been informed that the Education Committee will require it for education purposes in 1958 and preliminary discussion was given to the provision of alternative accommodation. This is not easy to provide in view of the fact that the Ministry of Health will almost certainly not agree to the building of a new nursery. Furthermore, it is not easy to find a suitable site. At present the indications are that we will have to hope that we can find some suitable house for adaptation, sometime between now and 1958.

Victoria Square Nursery. Unfortunately, the Matron was off duty throughout most of the year owing to ill-health and eventually she was placed on pension. As the result of a visit from inspectors of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, various improvements have been effected in this nursery. We have been told by the Education Committee that they are not likely to require the premises for another five or six years. It has therefore been decided to spend a fair amount of money on improvements of a capital nature.

The Committee did consider the possibility of a daily minder scheme to take the place of day nurseries but this did not commend itself to them.

Daily Average Attendance for each month of the year, 1955

(Monday to Friday)

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Totals
Holybrook House ...	* 32	32	* 36	† 34	† 34	†† 27	†† 18	† 28	33	† 31	† 31	†|| 33	369
Victoria Square ...	* 30	* 31	32	† 28	† 28	†§ 30	† 16	†§ 21	† 32	30	26	26	330
Totals ...	62	63	68	62	62	57	34	49	65	61	57	59	699

* Mumps † Measles ‡ Chicken Pox § Scarlet Fever || Whooping Cough

The following details relate to the position as at 31st December, 1955 :—

Number of Approved Places		Number of Children on the Register at the end of the year		Average daily attendance for year	
0-2 yrs.	2-5 yrs.	0-2 yrs.	2-5 yrs.	0-2 yrs.	2-5 yrs.
30	60	29	55	21	42

Dental Care of Expectant Mothers and Young Children. Mr. J. Campbell, L.D.S., Principal Dental Officer, reports as follows :—

Pre-School Children. The number of pre-school children who attended during the past year, has fallen slightly but this can be accounted for, by the fact

that Whitley Dental Clinic was closed for six months owing to the absence of the Dental Officer, on special leave.

The advantage of bringing children, under school age, to be dentally examined and treated, is unfortunately, not appreciated by many parents. The Dental Officers encourage parents, at all times, to bring their children to the clinic at a very early age. Much more could be done in this direction, if the staffing position could be substantially increased.

Expectant and Nursing Mothers. The temporary closure of Whitley Clinic has possibly reduced the number of mothers who have requested dental treatment, during 1955, but it is, unfortunately, true that many of them do not realise the importance of their dental condition during the ante-natal and post-natal periods. Good oral hygiene is always important but is vital in the case of the expectant or nursing mother.

At Whitley Clinic, arrangements have been in force, since 1953, for any mother, attending the ante-natal clinic, to be dentally examined as the Dental Surgery is in the same building.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE, 1955

DENTAL TREATMENT

A. NUMBERS PROVIDED WITH DENTAL CARE

	Examined	Needing Treatment	Treated	Made Dentally Fit
Expectant and Nursing Mothers ...	15	15	14	11
Children under five ...	181	181	181	177

B. FORMS OF DENTAL TREATMENT PROVIDED

	Scalings and gum treatment	Fillings	Silver Nitrate Treatment	Crowns or Inlays	Extractions	General Anaesthetics	Dentures provided Full upper or lower	Partial upper or lower	Radio-graphs
Expectant and nursing mothers ...	3	27	—	—	29	5	1	3	—
Children under five ...	10	41	303	—	147	42	—	—	—

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE, 1955

DENTAL TREATMENT

				Pre-school	Ante-natal	Post-natal
Inspected	...	...	...	181	8	7
Treated	...	...	...	181	7	7
Attendances	...	...	...	256	22	16
Extractions	...	...	...	147	6	23
Local Anaesthetics	...	...	...	48	9	7
General Anaesthetics	...	...	...	42	1	4
Fillings	...	...	...	41	18	9
Clean and Polish	...	...	...	10	3	—
Dressings	...	...	...	19	4	4
Silver Nitrate	...	...	...	303	—	—
Full Dentures	...	...	...	—	1	—
Part Dentures	...	...	...	—	1	2
Advice	...	...	...	10	—	1
Discharged	...	...	...	177	6	5

SECTION 23—DOMICILIARY MIDWIFERY

Arrangements for this service continued on the lines previously described, i.e. there are five municipal midwives (including one whole-time relief midwife) and six Q.V.I. midwives. Pupils from Battle Hospital continued to take the second part of Part II of the C.M.B. examination with the Queen Victoria Institute Midwives. I have also to report difficulty in recruitment of municipal midwives. After some difficulty we were able to replace Miss Parsons by Mrs. Comer but, unfortunately, she left at the end of the year. The vacancy was not filled until February, 1956.

Reference has already been made in my introduction to the retirement of Miss Lee from her post as Non-medical Supervisor of Midwives.

The demand for institutional accommodation, of one type or another, continued throughout the year. The work of "vetting" applications for admission to hospital or general practitioner nursing home on social grounds continued. Altogether 338 cases were vetted of whom 222 were recommended for admission, either to a hospital or to an H.M.C. Maternity Home. The following table shows the trend of confinements during recent years. Particulars of the births in other institutions will be found in the following pages :—

Year	Total Confinements	Domiciliary Confinements	Percentage of Total
1938	1,552	1,000	64.4
1939	1,564	897	57.7
1940	1,725	931	54.0
1941	1,913	931	49.0
1942	1,833	858	46.8
1943	1,925	907	47.0
1944	2,139	925	43.2
1945	2,066	806	39.0
1946	2,226	791	35.5
1947	2,250	765	34.0
1948	2,100	645	30.7
1949	1,855	603	32.5
1950	1,809	559	30.9
1951	1,805	635	35.1
1952	1,767	614	34.7
1953	1,700	601	35.3
1954	1,678	615	36.6
1955	1,707	603	35.2

Stillbirths. Thirty-five stillbirths were reported during the year. The stillbirth rate for total births during recent years has been as follows :—

1946	...	...	73
1947	...	...	54
1948	...	...	52
1949	...	...	41
1950	...	...	41
1951	...	...	37
1952	...	...	47
1953	...	...	39
1954	...	...	32
1955	...	...	37

An analysis of 35 stillbirths revealed the following :—

8 cases were booked to Battle Hospital and were delivered there

7 cases were transferred in labour to Battle Hospital from Hospital Management Committee Nursing Homes

8 cases were transferred in labour to Battle Hospital from domiciliary midwives

5 cases occurred in Hospital Management Committee Nursing Homes

7 were domiciliary cases delivered on districts

Causes were :—

- 10 malformed
- 6 malpresentations
- 3 cause undetermined
- 1 due to Virus infection from common cold in the house (domiciliary case)
- 1 caesarean
- 2 B.B.A.
- 12 premature births associated with toxæmia

Maternal Deaths. There were no maternal deaths during the year.

Puerperal Pyrexia :—

- 6 occurred in Institutional practice
- 9 were in domiciliary practice

Causes were :—

- 3 Mastitis
- 1 Thrombosis
- 2 Reaction to labour
- 9 Staph. infection

Ophthalmia Neonatorum. One case was reported during the year. Recovery was uneventful.

The number of midwives practising in the area at the end of the year is given in the table on page 36.

Pemphigus Neonatorum. One case was reported in domiciliary practice. The condition was mild and was treated by the district nurse.

The following table gives a comparison of the work carried out by the Queen Victoria Institute midwives and the directly employed Municipal Midwives. No account has been taken of pupil midwives who work with the former.

Total Births which occurred in the Borough—Reading and Non-Reading Residents (based on notifications)

<i>Births</i>								
Male	...	1,304	Legitimate	...	2,381	Live	...	2,431
Female	...	1,195	Illegitimate	...	118	Still	...	68

<i>Weights</i>							
2-lb. 3-oz. or under	...	...	...	...	...	...	37
2-lb. 4-oz.—3-lb. 4-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
3-lb. 5-oz.—4-lb. 6-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	56
4-lb. 7-oz.—4-lb. 15-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	53
5-lb. 0-oz.—5-lb. 7-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	82
5-lb. 8-oz.—5-lb. 15-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	127
6-lb. 0-oz.—6-lb. 7-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	229
6-lb. 8-oz.—6-lb. 15-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	358
7-lb. 0-oz.—7-lb. 7-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	457
7-lb. 8-oz. or over	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,074

<i>Place of Birth</i>							
Domiciliary	...	...	...	...	...	...	605
Hospital	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,075
Private Nursing Home	...	...	...	...	...	...	176
H.M.C. Maternity Homes	...	...	...	...	...	...	443
Contractual	...	...	...	...	...	...	200

Dellwood

Number of patients delivered by midwives	...	...	351
Number of patients delivered by doctors	...	...	90
Number of infants wholly breast-fed	...	...	415
Maternal Deaths	...	...	Nil

Particulars of Confinements, of Reading Women Inside and Outside the Borough, based on notifications

Births

Male	...	905	Legitimate	...	1,637	Live	...	1,670
Female	...	802	Illegitimate	...	70	Still	...	37

Weights

2-lb. 3-oz. or under	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
2-lb. 4-oz.-3-lb. 4-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
3-lb. 5-oz.-4-lb. 6-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	28
4-lb. 7-oz.-4-lb. 15-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
5-lb. 0-oz.-5-lb. 7-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	44
5-lb. 8-oz.-5-lb. 15-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	80
6-lb. 0-oz.-6-lb. 7-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	165
6-lb. 8-oz.-6-lb. 15-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	249
7-lb. 0-oz.-7-lb. 7-oz.	...	...	...	...	...	...	318
7-lb. 8-oz. or over	...	...	...	...	...	...	762

Place of Birth

Born in Borough	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,608
Born out of Borough	...	...	...	...	...	...	99

Domiciliary

Inside Borough	...	...	...	...	...	...	599
Outside Borough	...	...	...	...	...	...	4

Hospital

Battle (booked)	...	...	...	...	...	...	421
Battle (emergency)	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Other	...	...	...	...	...	...	21

Private Nursing Homes

The Hill	...	...	...	...	...	...	60
St. Monan's	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Chiltern	...	...	...	...	...	...	6

H.M.C. Maternity Homes

Dellwood	...	...	...	...	...	...	369
Wallingford	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
Townlands	...	...	...	...	...	...	32
Wokingham	...	...	...	...	...	...	23
Sandleford	...	...	...	...	...	...	—

Contractual (arrangements with nursing homes)

Chiltern	...	...	...	...	...	...	142
Other	...	...	...	...	...	...	—

Attended during labour by doctor ... 403

Attended during labour by midwife only ... 1,304

Domiciliary cases attended during labour by doctor ... 143

Domiciliary cases attended during labour by midwife only ... 456

PERIOD OF GESTATION

No. of Weeks	Total Borough Births	Other Area Births in the Borough	All Births in the Borough
20	—	1	1
22	—	2	2
24	1	1	2
25	—	2	2
26	3	1	4
27	1	—	1
28	6	5	11
29	4	1	5
30	7	9	16
31	—	2	2
32	12	14	26
33	3	4	7
34	6	12	18
35	10	11	21
36	36	32	68
37	30	29	59
38	101	74	175
39	64	57	121
40	1,381	604	1,985
41	11	12	23
42	26	14	40
43	4	1	5
44	1	3	4
	1,707	891	2,598

CAUSES OF INFANT DEATHS, 1955

Cause	Under 1 week	1-2 weeks	2-3 weeks	3-4 weeks	Total under 1 month	1-3 months	3-6 months	6-9 months	9-12 months	Total under 1 year
Other infective and parasitic diseases	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Vascular lesions of nervous system ...	4	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	4
Pneumonia	—	—	—	—	—	1	3	—	1	5
Bronchitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other disease of respiratory system	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Congenital Malformations	6	1	—	—	7	—	1	—	—	8
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	15	—	—	—	15	—	1	—	—	16
All other Accidents	1	—	—	1	2	1	—	—	—	3
Totals ...	26	1	—	1	28	2	5	—	1	36

		Number of Midwives practising in the area of the Local Super- vising Authority at the end of the year		
		Domiciliary Midwives	Midwives in Institutions	Total
(a)	Midwives employed by the Authority	4	—	4
(b)	Midwives employed by Voluntary Organisations—			
(i)	Under arrangements with the Local Health Authority in pursuance of Section 23 of the National Health Service Act, 1946	6	—	6
(ii)	Otherwise (including Hospi- tals not transferred to the Minister under the National Health Service Act) ...	—	—	—
(c)	Midwives employed by Hospital Management Committees or Boards of Governors under the National Health Service Act :—			
(i)	Under arrangements with the Local Health Authority in pursuance of Section 23 of the National Health Service Act, 1946	—	28	28
(ii)	Otherwise	—	—	—
(d)	Midwives in Private Practice (in- cluding Midwives employed in Nursing Homes)		9	9
Total ...		10	37	47

Number of Deliveries attended by Midwives in the Area during the year

	Domiciliary Cases				Totals	Cases in Institutions
	Doctor not booked		Doctor booked			
	Doctor present at time of delivery of child (2)	Doctor not present at time of delivery of child (3)	Doctor present at time of delivery of child (either the booked Doctor or another) (4)	Doctor not present at time of delivery of child (5)		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
(a) Midwives employed by the Authority ...	—	1	76	199	276	—
(b) Midwives employed by Voluntary Organisations :—						
(i) Under arrangements with the Local Health Authority in pursuance of Section 23 of the National Health Service Act, 1946	3	6	63	251	323	—
(ii) Otherwise (including Hospitals not transferred to the Minister under the National Health Service Act)	—	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Midwives employed by Hospital Management Committees or Boards of Governors under the National Health Service Act ...	—	—	—	—	—	1,610
(d) Midwives in Private Practice (including Midwives employed in Nursing Homes) ...	—	—	—	—	—	377
Totals ...	3	7	139	450	599	1,987

(1)	Number of Domiciliary Midwives practising in the area at end of year who were qualified to administer inhalational analgesics in accordance with the requirements of the Central Midwives Board (2)	Number of sets of apparatus for the administration of inhalational analgesics in use at end of year		Number of cases in which inhalational analgesics were administered by midwives in <i>domiciliary</i> practice during the year			Number of cases in which pethidine was administered by midwives in <i>domiciliary</i> practice during the year	
		Gas and air (3)	“ Trilene ” (4)	When doctor was present at time of delivery of child		When doctor was not present at time of delivery of child	When doctor was present at time of delivery of child	When doctor was not present at time of delivery of child
				Gas and air (5)	“ Trilene ” (6)			
(a) Domiciliary Midwives employed directly by the Local Health Authority	4	6	—	66	—	184	47	108
(b) Domiciliary Midwives employed under Section 23 by voluntary organisations as agents of Local Health Authority ...	6	7	—	52	—	217	37	131
(c) Domiciliary Midwives employed under Section 23 by hospital authorities as agents of Local Health Authority ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
(d) Domiciliary Midwives in private practice or employed by organisations not acting as agents of Local Health Authority	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	10	13	—	118	—	401	84	239

QUEEN VICTORIA INSTITUTE

MUNICIPAL

Year	No. of Midwives	No. of Confinements	Average per Midwife	No. of Midwives	No. of Confinements	Average per Midwife
1949	6	328	55	5	275	55
1950	6	285	47	4.8	274	57
1951	6	343	57	4	302	75
1952	6	339	56	4.2	320	76
1953	6	287	48	5	314	63
1954	6	354	59	4.6	258	64
1955	6	323	54	4.8	276	57

SECTION 24—HEALTH VISITING

During the year, two nurses, who had been away on an assisted training scheme, commenced duties as fully qualified health visitors. It was also possible to take further steps in the amalgamation of the school nursing service with the general health visiting services of the Borough. At the end of the year the position was briefly as follows :—

Whole time School Nurses	...	...	...	...	...	4
Nurses doing H.V. and S.N. duties	...	...	...	...	...	8
Nurses doing whole-time health visiting	...	...	...	...	...	3
Part-time nurses doing health visiting	...	...	...	...	...	1
Part-time nurses doing clinic duty	...	...	...	...	...	1
Tuberculosis health visitors	...	...	...	...	...	2
Vacancies	...	...	...	...	...	5

I am pleased to be able to report a continuation of the co-operation and good relationships which have existed between health visitors, general practitioners, hospital medical staff, hospital almoners, and other social workers. The following table is a summary of the work carried out during the year :—

First visits to children under 1 year of age	...	...	1,681
Total visits to children under 1 year of age	...	...	8,910
Total visits to children aged 1-2 years	...	...	4,336
Total visits to children aged 2-5 years	...	...	8,749
First visits to expectant mothers	...	...	391
Total visits to expectant mothers	...	...	729
Other visits	...	...	2,149
Visits paid by Tuberculosis Health Visitor	...	...	2,986
Total number of children under 5 years visited during the year	...	...	7,451
Total number of families visited by H.V.'s	...	...	5,261

Additional visits made by the Superintendent Health Visitor :

Primary birth visits	...	...	...	...	...	62
First year visits	...	...	...	...	...	9
Other visits	...	...	...	...	...	91

I have already paid tribute to the services which have been rendered by Miss Lee in her dual capacity as non-Medical Supervisor of Midwives and Superintendent

Health Visitor. She was succeeded by Miss M. Webber who commenced duties on the 1st January, 1956. Miss Webber holds the position of Superintendent Health Visitor and Superintendent School Nurse. During the year, many discussions took place amongst staff as to the best method of deploying the health visitors in view of the shortage. Records are filed in family units and special cards have been prepared for adults who will be included in the dossier as time goes on. In certain circles there has been a great deal of talk about selective visiting. Personally, I view this suggestion with a good deal of caution. The idea of selective visiting is that certain people who are known to be in difficulties are given extra attention. It seems to me, however, that true prevention consists of giving help before a crisis threatens and for this reason I have, so far as possible, adhered to the old fashioned practice of regular visiting. Cards are brought forward at the appropriate interval (infants every two months up to 1st year, from 1-2 years every four months, and from 2-5 years every six months).

The health visitor is asked to make an entry at these dates although, of course the entry in some cases may be to the effect that a child is attending the clinic and doing well. But this system has, to my mind, the merit that it does bring before the health visitor at regular intervals, all the children in her care and there is little excuse for overlooking anyone. It also has the great advantage that if a health visitor is absent or leaves the district, it is very much easier for her successor to pick up the threads. An index system is also used to denote children suffering from certain disabilities, e.g. delicate, physically handicapped.

At the time of writing, the report of the Working Party on the training and recruitment of health visitors has not been published and we await their findings with considerable interest.

Further reference to the work of health visitors will be found in the section on problem families. It is difficult to think of something new to say about the work of health visitors for they have become an established part of our medico-social life. But the advent of more spectacular and possibly more widely advertised services for children, should not diminish our appreciation of the excellent work which health visitors are doing. In my opinion the "problem families" of Reading are by no means as great a problem as in some towns and I feel that this must, in some considerable part, be due to the steady efforts and influence of the health visitors in carrying out their daily duties.

SECTION 25—HOME NURSING

The Queen Victoria Institute continue to act as the agent for the Council in respect of home nursing as well as part of the Domiciliary Midwifery Service. During the year discussions continued about the purchase of four existing nurses' homes which belong to the Queen Victoria Institute but so far nothing definite has been decided. It is a pleasure to report that the position as regards the staff has, on the whole, remained satisfactory. The number of staff at the end of the year was as follows :—

Superintendent	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Assistant Superintendents	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Q.V.I. district nurses who have completed their period of contract	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Q.V.I. district nurses completing their contract of service	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Student nurses	...	...	...	...	...	(1 Male)	...	7
Male nurses (completing their contract of service)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Non Q.V.I. nurses—								
Full-time	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Part-time	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4

The following table gives a statistical summary of the visits paid by nurses to various types of case during the year :—

							<i>Number of Cases</i>	<i>Number of Visits</i>
Medical	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,477	61,814
Surgical	...	...	...	...	...	...	317	8,215
Infectious disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	32	299
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	168	6,426
Maternal complications	...	...	...	...	...	...	99	1,003
Others	...	...	...	...	...	...	350	1,331
							<hr/> 3,443 <hr/>	<hr/> 79,088 <hr/>

The following information is of interest :—1,601 of the 3,443 patients were over 65 at the age of the first visit and they received 45,428 visits out of a total of 79,088, i.e. about half the patients visited were over the age of 65 and they received well over half of the total visits paid. 182 patients received more than 24 visits during the year—a total of 24,213.

101 children were attended and they received 932 visits.

Injections of various sorts form about 10% of the treatments given by district nurses.

Year	Number of cases nursed	Total number of visits
1949	2,741	92,000
1950	2,761	84,029
1951	2,831	66,937
1952	3,082	74,168
1953	3,490	77,717
1954	3,294	81,089
1955	3,443	79,088

The arrangements for the issue of nursing requisites was changed somewhat at the beginning of the year. The Queen Victoria Institute now only hold a small supply for emergency use and issues are mainly made from a central depot at Star Lane on the production of a note of authorisation signed by a district nurse. We have found that this rearrangement has freed district nurses from a good deal of routine and has enabled us to keep a better check on the articles which were loaned out.

SECTION 26—VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION (excluding B.C.G.)

Arrangements for immunisation against diphtheria and against whooping cough continued to be carried out on the lines described in previous reports. The following

table gives the position as at 31st December, 1955. The figures include children who were given combined whooping cough and diphtheria immunisation.

Immunisation in relation to Child Population :—

Number of children who had completed a course of Immunisation at any time between 1st January, 1941 and 31st December, 1955.

Age at 31/12/55 i.e. born in the year ...	Under 1 1955	1-4 1951-1954	5-9 1946-1950	10-14 1941-1945	Under 15 Total
Last complete course of injections (whether prim- ary or booster)					
A 1951-1955 ...	275	4,475	2,848	373	7,971
B 1941-1950 ...	—	—	4,525	5,750	10,275
C Estimated mid-year child population ...	1,610	6,390	17,800		25,800
Immunity Index	17.08	70.03	75.8		70.72

Booster Doses—For Diphtheria alone ... 217
For Diphtheria and Whooping Cough ... 662

The number of children who completed the course of inoculation with Pertussis Vaccines (including S.B.M. and Vaccines combined with diphtheria prophylactic) during the year 1955 was as follows :—

Age at Date of Final Injection			
Under 1 year	1-4 years	5-14 years	Total
793	363	138	1,294

Booster Doses—Combined Whooping Cough and Diphtheria ... 662
Whooping Cough ... 8

IMMUNISATION FIGURES FOR PERIOD JANUARY 1st to DECEMBER 31st, 1955

Clinic	Sess- ions	No. of children who completed Immunisation against Diphtheria	No. of children who completed Immunisation against Diphtheria and Whooping Cough	No. of children who completed a course of Immunisation against Whooping Cough	No. of children who received a reinforcing injection against Diphtheria	No. of children who received a reinforcing injection against Diphtheria and Whooping Cough	No. of children who received a reinforcing injection against Whooping Cough	Total
Grovelands ...	25	12	128	2	37	103	—	282
Whitley ...	26	6	157	—	15	70	—	248
Tilehurst ...	13	4	85	1	10	26	—	126
Caversham ...	13	8	52	2	31	55	1	149
School, Queen's Road ...	25	6	171	1	33	101	—	312
Southcote ...	25	6	126	5	29	130	—	296
Emmer Green ...	3	—	4	—	—	—	—	4
Geo. Field Infants School	2	—	—	—	2	20	—	22
Emmer Green Primary School ...	1	—	—	—	7	6	—	13
The Hill Primary School...	1	—	—	—	6	3	—	9
Carried out by Private Practitioners ...		22	547	13	47	148	7	784
Totals ...		64	1,270	24	217	662	8	2,245

Vaccinations performed during 1955

Age at 31/12/55 i.e., born in year	Under 1 1955	1 year 1954	2-4 1951-53	5-14 1941-50	15 or over before 1941	Total
Number Vaccinated	710	4	39	15	92	860
Number Re-vaccinated	26	1	1	1	71	100

Vaccination Figures for Period 1st January to 31st December, 1955

Clinic	Sessions	0-6 months	7-12 months	Over 12 months	Totals
Grovelands ...	25	54	11	2	67 (8)
Whitley ...	26	63	13	6	82 (7)
Tilehurst ...	13	29	12	2	43 (2)
Caversham ...	13	33	4	1	38 (1)
Queen's Road ...	25	46	20	42	108 (33)
Southcote ...	25	34	6	6	46 (7)
Emmer Green ...	3	5	1	—	6
Carried out by Private Prac- titioners ...	—	341	64	165	570 (42)
Totals ...		605	131	224	960 (100)

Figures in parenthesis denote re-vaccination

SECTION 27—AMBULANCE SERVICE

A. **Ambulances.** The day-to-day supervision of the Ambulance Service continued under the aegis of the Transport Manager. The fleet at the end of the year comprised eight large ambulances and two small ambulances.

The following table gives particulars of the work carried out since 1949 for Borough and non-Borough cases :—

Year		Journeys	Patients	Mileage
1949	... ..	8,797	10,098	88,884
1950	... ..	10,702	12,165	106,256
1951	... ..	12,176	14,097	119,839
1952	... ..	15,649	18,096	139,596
1953	... ..	19,357	23,482	155,528
1954	... ..	21,361	24,453	159,361
1955	... ..	22,224	26,207	162,369

AMBULANCE SERVICE, 1955—ALL AREAS

				<i>Journeys</i>	<i>Patients</i>	<i>Mileage</i>
Emergency (i.e. 999 calls)	...	...	...	1,497	1,444	8,231
Non-urgent	...	...	...	20,288	24,340	149,624
Bed Bureau	...	...	...	387	410	3,428
Midwifery Flying Squad	...	...	...	52	13	1,086
Departmental Ambulances	...	...	...	15,398	17,360	113,693
Departmental Light Ambulances	...	...	...	6,260	8,051	44,079
St. John Ambulance...	...	...	...	565	795	4,225
British Red Cross Society	...	...	...	1	1	372

BOROUGH CASES ONLY

					<i>Journeys</i>	<i>Mileage</i>
Emergency (i.e. 999 calls)	...	...	...	...	1,265	5,295
Non-urgent	...	...	...	...	18,226	123,291
Bed Bureau	...	...	...	...	359	2,743
Midwifery Flying Squad	...	...	...	...	49	975
*Departmental Ambulances	...	...	...	...	19,373	128,234
St. John Ambulance	...	...	...	...	525	3,698
British Red Cross Society	...	...	...	...	1	372

* Includes light ambulances

In addition, 4 patients were conveyed by railway ambulance for a total of approximately 961 miles.

Our thanks are due to the Transport Manager for the way this service has been administered, especially in view of the increasing difficulties of manpower during the year. Agreement was reached as to the necessity of full-time Assistant Ambulance Officer, and I am pleased to say that this appointment has been approved by the Council.

Discussions also took place as to arrangements for dealing with major accidents. A central store of emergency equipment has been set up and arrangements made whereby certain personnel are connected by direct telephone line to the Ambulance Depot. These arrangements were tested out when the Didcot railway accident took place about mid-day on Sunday, 20th November, 1955. I am pleased to say that the Reading ambulances responded well to the call and all arrangements, so far as we were concerned, went extremely smoothly.

B. Hospital Car Service. There was no material change in the arrangements for this service. The following table gives a summary of the work carried out since 1949 :—

HOSPITAL CAR SERVICE

<i>Year</i>			<i>Mileage</i>	<i>Patients</i>
1949	...	...	88,332	6,213
1950	...	...	78,062	7,408
1951	...	...	86,224	9,949
1952	...	...	108,808	11,712
1953	...	...	84,992	8,768
1954	...	...	90,249	9,374
1955	...	...	75,282	7,304

C. General Considerations. Although the increase in the use of Section 27 transport continues, I have nothing to add or to detract from the comments I have

made previously. I have always tried to stress the necessity for providing adequate ambulance cover for a very important area in the whole of 24 hours—this was exemplified when the Didcot railway accident took place. Figures are also available which show an increase in the turnover of hospital patients and the continued increase in the number of out-patients. There is no doubt that the Ambulance Service plays an important part in facilitating this improvement.

SECTION 28—PREVENTION OF ILLNESS, CARE AND AFTER-CARE

A. **Tuberculosis** (See also Section *re* Infectious Disease)). The arrangements for the care and after-care of tuberculous patients continued to work well. The Council's Tuberculosis Welfare Officer acted as Hon. Secretary for the Reading Tuberculosis Care Association. For some time we were without a successor to Miss Foster-Carter but eventually we were able to appoint Miss B. I. Hartley who commenced duties on 1st October, 1955. I am pleased to say that Miss Hartley has followed faithfully in the steps of her predecessors and the very satisfactory integration of statutory and non-statutory services has continued. I would like to express my thanks to members of the Reading Tuberculosis Care Association for the time and thought they give this work. Also a very special word of thanks to the Seals Sale Committee which, once again, organised a highly successful sale to provide the bulk of the money from which the Care Association meets its expenses.

(a) *Report of Tuberculosis Welfare Officer.* As in previous years the aim is for the Tuberculosis Welfare Officer to see all patients who have to undergo full time treatment for tuberculosis. The entire case load for the year 1955 was in the region of 300. Of this number, 120 were new patients. Some of these had more difficulty in accepting their illness and adjusting to their changed circumstances than others and required a considerable amount of help and time from the Welfare Officer.

In dealing with the psychosocial needs of patients whether in hospital or on home treatment, the Welfare Officer acts also as liaison between the patient and the social resources, both statutory and voluntary, of the community. Close co-operation is maintained with the Children's Department, Disablement Resettlement Officer, National Assistance Board, Housing Department, Probation Officer, Family Case Worker and many others.

The following shows the main types of help given through the Public Health Department :—

Convalescence	...	...	8
Free Milk	...	...	109
Meals on Wheels	...	...	254
Boarding out of Contacts	...	...	2

Under the Christmas Parcel Scheme, 84 Christmas parcels were distributed, two-thirds of the cost was paid for by the Public Health Department, the remaining one-third of the cost was met by the Care Association.

(b) *Reading Tuberculosis Care Association.* The Hon. Secretary reports as follows :—

The Reading Tuberculosis Care Association continues its work of filling the gaps left by statutory provisions. Its ways of helping remain flexible and adaptable to meet current needs. Grants for the past year have been met for such needs as furnishings, relatives' holidays, life assurance, pocket money, etc.

The following is a summary of the grants given during the year :—

Provision of clothing	...	...	...	...	...	11
Radios (repairs, batteries and licences)	...	...	...	...	...	5
Home Help	...	...	...	...	...	6
Bedding	...	...	...	...	...	7
Travelling Expenses	...	...	...	...	...	4
Fuel...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Groceries	...	...	...	...	...	9
Other	...	...	...	...	...	13

Messrs. Sutton & Sons Ltd. once again kindly gave a large consignment of seeds. Under the Association's Gardening Scheme two men were employed full time. Unfortunately, owing to the exceptionally hot summer and to illness a number of the gardens requiring attention were not visited.

The Fuel Scheme provided 94 patients with 4-cwt. of coal.

Mention has already been made of the Christmas Parcel Scheme. Toys were given to 60 children and a small gift was made to each of the 23 patients in Park Hospital.

Early in 1955 the British Red Cross Library Service extended their work to cover patients suffering from tuberculosis who were receiving treatment at home. The Association pays a yearly subscription of 5/- for 20 patients and pays for the petrol in delivering the books, costing approximately 30/- a month. The books are delivered once a fortnight and during the year 919 books were issued to home bound patients.

(c) *Christmas Seals Sale.* For the sixth successive year the Reading Tuberculosis Care Association organised a Christmas Seal Sale within the County Borough of Reading. The sale was managed by a committee of 23 voluntary workers, with Mr. W. J. Farrier as chairman, Mr. W. Ramsdale as honorary treasurer, Mr. A. W. Crowther as manager of selling centres and Mr. C. E. House as seal sale organiser.

Both for the purposes of propaganda in the prevention of tuberculosis and for the raising of funds for its sufferers, the Committee decided to increase its efforts by comparison with former years. Accordingly, a communication signed by the President of the Association—His Worship the Mayor of Reading—Councillor A. E. Smith, J.P., was addressed to 3,473 local residents, 388 places of employment and 110 licensed premises.

The local press ("Berkshire Chronicle," "Reading Review" and "Reading Standard") have again participated in publicising the sale by letter, report and advertisement. The revised posters designed by Mr. T. R. Williams (a member of the seal sale committee) have been displayed by firms, individuals and on public hoardings. In the latter the committee were grateful to Messrs. Hill & Sherwin for a two weeks' display free of charge.

Three members of the committee (Alderman T. S. W. Smart, Mr. F. W. White and Mr. T. R. Williams) have made two permanent attractively designed folding tables for use at selling centres. These have "caught the eye" of the general public, and placed the selling of seals at specific centres on an official basis. The committee have expressed their indebtedness to the Management of Heelas Limited, Wellsteeds Limited, Tutty's Limited, the Reading Cattle Market and the Reading Co-operative Society (Cheapside, London Road and Prospect Street, Caversham stores) for allowing free use of part of their premises as selling centres, and also to the 37 seal sellers at these premises. The total receipts at these centres, which was a record,

amounted to £100 16s. 1d. Christmas seals have also been on sale at the Chest Clinic and the Health Welfare Office, who have also recorded good collections.

For the first time the committee set itself a target. The target figure of £700—an amount far in excess of any previous amount collected. Although contributions are still being received the target has already been exceeded.

(d) *Occupational Therapy.* Miss L. D. Saunders, Occupational Therapist, has continued her good work. Miss Saunders reports as follows:—

Supplies of the £392 worth of materials issued this year have provided occupational therapy for a total number of 122 tuberculous patients. These include 53 taking treatment in hospital plus 24 entirely on home treatment, and another 45 who began treatment in hospital and subsequently continued at home during the year.

Of the 69 patients on home treatment alone, 35 are new this year and apart from frequent visits to those in hospital, approximately 500 visits have been made to patients in their own homes while others out and about could call at the department for materials and necessary instruction.

A considerable number of smaller and varied but useful articles have been made in knitting, weaving, leather work, which are all as usual very well supported.

About 40 woven seagrass topped stools are among other useful commodities that patients have been able to make and buy for their own homes, together with about £35 worth of canework in various shapes, and an even greater number of embroidered cloths, etc., all combining the added benefit of a successful attempt at doing something new for home, with healing occupation.

Christmas crackers this year were a new and happy craft and many novelty gifts such as crinoline work and plastic covered rope brushes, painting and modelling kits have also provided fresh and invigorating interest.

£349 has been remitted by patients for their materials, and articles completed, returned, and sent to Helping Hand Shops number 150.

Two hundred and six articles were sold by Helping Hand Shops this year. Only three or four patients dating back before 1954 are still in need of and doing occupational therapy.

(e) *B.C.G. Vaccination.* During the year 204 contacts were vaccinated with B.C.G. and 316 school leavers completed the full course of vaccination, including the post vaccination Mantoux test.

B. Provision of Nursing Equipment and Apparatus. During the year we were able to establish a central store for nursing equipment. The district nursing homes now hold only a small stock of equipment for emergency use. As a general rule relatives are referred to the central store from which they draw the appropriate nursing equipment as recommended by the district nurse. We have found this arrangement to work very satisfactorily in progress and relieves the district nursing section of a great deal of routine clerical work. Altogether 316 articles were supplied.

C. Holiday Convalescence. During the year 39 adults, 2 mother and child, and 13 children were sent away for periods of convalescence under the Council's scheme.

D. Health Education (see also report of Chief Sanitary Inspector). The main feature of the Health Education programme in 1955 was the Reading Foot Health Week, which was held from 21st-26th November inclusive. The programme, devised to interest all sections of the public on the care of the feet and the choice of suitable

footwear, was arranged by the Central Council for Health Education and organised locally by the Public Health Department.

An exhibition at the Broad Street Congregational Hall was opened to the public on the first day by the Medical Officer of Health and was visited throughout the week by conducted parties of school children. Film shows and demonstrations took place in a number of schools, also talks to Parents' Associations every evening. 'Toddlers' shoe-fitting demonstrations were arranged at the Infant Welfare Centres. A film show and talk by Dr. Burton and Mrs. Buxton, of the Central Council for Health Education, was given at St. Laurence Hall for school teachers at the invitation of Dr. Hughes.

Many shoe departments and shops throughout the town co-operated by supplying shoe-fitting demonstrators and by displaying appropriate posters in shop windows and advertisements in the press.

Throughout the year a number of talks were given by School Medical Officers to various Parent-Teacher Associations, societies and clubs.

(E) *WORK OF THE FAMILY CASE WORKERS—PREVENTION OF BREAK-UP OF FAMILIES (Circular 27/54)*

This section should be read in conjunction with the comments on the provision of accommodation for families under the National Assistance Act and with the work of Health Visitors under Section 24 of the National Health Service Act. In the last two years I have devoted a considerable portion of my report to consideration of this subject and a fair amount of space is allocated again this year. The fact that so much space is taken up should not, of itself, be taken as an indication that the work of the Family Case Workers is a major portion of the work of the Health Department. But the implications and applications of Circular 27/54 have been so much discussed and there is so much interest in the Reading experiment that I feel justified in commenting again in some detail.

Last year I issued a word of warning that possibly the pendulum has swung too far in one direction and that there is a danger of keeping together a family in which there is no nucleus and no cohesion and, therefore, nothing upon which one can build at all. I repeat this caveat. There is no doubt that problem families are "fashionable" at the moment but I feel that the psychiatrist's advice that everything possible should be done to keep a family together is sometimes interpreted by enthusiasts as meaning that under no circumstances shall a family be broken up. The truth is, surely, that each of these so-called problem families must be considered as an individual situation and just as much care must be given before making a decision not to break up a family as should be given to allowing it to break up.

One further word about prevention. There is pressure in many quarters that more preventive work should be done and that additional welfare officers of one type or another should be appointed to carry out this work. But surely prevention, in the true sense of the word, takes place at a much earlier stage. When things have got to such a pitch that the family is in danger of breaking up or serious consideration is being given to taking away some of the children, then true prevention has failed and all we are doing is trying to save the pieces. It seems to me just as logical to say that a surgeon who ties a bleeding artery is practising preventive medicine as to say that a welfare worker who arrives on the scene when break-up is imminent is practising preventive work. In other words, true prevention still lies with the Health Visitor who is the only social worker with an entrée into families before any problem has arisen. It is she who can give timely advice and prevent things from going wrong at an early stage. It may well be that the root cause in some of these cases is some personality defect which is not amenable to any form of treatment or prevention and it is in precisely these cases that the utmost care must be taken in

planning the appropriate services. Indeed there are some people who consider that preventive work in this sphere should be part of the preventive mental health services.

The varying conceptions of the appropriate administrative background for work with these families merely emphasise our ignorance of the best method of dealing with them.

Much has been written on the value of co-ordinating committees of one type or another. Our experience in Reading has been that the co-ordinating committee mechanism has not been a great success. We tend to go in for *ad hoc* conferences of the people interested in a particular case—in a great many cases this means direct personal consultation between the Children's Officer and myself. I think it would be appropriate here if I were to pay tribute to the co-operation and help which I have received from Miss Claisse and her staff. In other words, I would say that there is no *best* method of dealing with this problem—each area must develop its own practice and the practice will to a large extent be determined by the personalities of the various people on the spot.

I hope that nothing in the foregoing remarks will lead anyone to believe that I am doubting the value of the work of the Family Case Workers or having second thoughts on the subject. The fact that I recommended the appointment of a second worker should dispel any such doubts since it is hoped that the appointment of the second worker would allow us to undertake regular visiting of families who have not yet reached the stage of threatened break-up due to eviction or other causes.

One method of doing this, which merits special comment, is the liaison which we have effected with the Housing Department and with the Borough Treasurer's Department in relation to families who have fallen sufficiently into arrears with their rent to warrant service of a Notice to Quit. Altogether we investigated 44 such families and we found that 13 of them were already being visited as problem families. Of the remaining 31, 14 were discovered to have adequate means but were either careless payers or bad managers so far as money is concerned. Four had had temporary setbacks due to illness and 5 had illness of a chronic nature in the household. Of these 9, only 2 have had further arrears in the period August 1955 to February 1956. Our tentative conclusions from this arrangement is that arrears of rent as such are not necessarily an indication of a problem family and that information can be obtained about potential problem families from other sources. It is, however, proposed to proceed with this scheme for a further period since a timely word of advice may have good effects which are difficult to assess at the time.

The appointment of a second Case Worker has also made it possible to undertake regular visiting of ten families who are not in such same danger of break-up that referral to the Reading Family Aid Group is considered justifiable. We have found that the difficulties of this group of families is mainly with the question of money. The Case Worker has spent a great deal of time in helping with the planning of budgets and encouraging them to save for their needs rather than embarking on hire purchase. Financial chaos is a symptom of the instability of one or both of the parents, sometimes coupled with acute illness. Some young wives with large families are, not unnaturally, swamped by sheer numbers and their limited skill in household management is overwhelmed. In such cases payments for school dinners and attendance at nursery school for the children is encouraged so that the mother can concentrate on the home with only the very young children in it.

Reading Family Aid Group. I must open my comments, on this matter by once again paying tribute to the Group's continued keenness and interest. Four new families were taken on during the year for regular visiting by the Group and the new Family Case Worker carries a proportion of these. One of the methods of working with these families is a period of residential treatment. One mother of 23 expecting her sixth baby was sent for a period of two months with three of her children to

Brentwood Recuperative Centre at the expense of the Health Department. The effects of the two months' recuperation and a training was a far better approach to household planning in the care of the home. She returned very much improved in every way and although the difficulties of the family are by no means solved the attitude of the parents to their troubles has made them seem less overwhelming.

During the year the problem has arisen when to retire from a family which does not respond to close supervision. Whether the reason for lack of success is that the parents genuinely cannot do better, or that they could care better for their children and will not, the problem still remains. One or two families give anxiety to a number of agencies but the condition of the children and the home has not warranted legal action to protect the children. On the other hand, the Group has withdrawn from two families where the Children's Officer and Probation Officer are now undertaking supervision. There was a fear that a family might cease to receive regular visits in order that conditions might deteriorate to the stage where action could be taken, but that this stage might never be reached, even though other social workers are anxious about the children.

One of the interesting points arising out of the year's work is the diversity of attainment among the children known to the Group. Only nine children out of 95 are at E.S.N. school or awaiting a place, one child is awaiting a place at an epileptic colony. In a family of nine children one attends E.S.N. school and one was awarded a form prize in a normal school; the father spent two years in an M.D. Institution. In another family of five, two boys attend E.S.N. school while another is in an "A" stream in junior school. Here again the parents appear to be themselves of low intelligence. Although many of the parents have poor physical and mental characters to hand on to their children, the children do not in each case seem to inherit the worst features.

The year's work has also clearly shown the importance of good physical and mental health in the mother of the family. Illness of the mother appears to cause greater emotional disturbance and financial hardship than the illness and unemployment of the father. This is particularly so where the children are under five years old. Hardly any of the mothers in the families visited by the Group is in good health and frequent child-bearing seems to be largely responsible for this. These mothers are not capable of taking best advantage of family limitation services, but this in itself does not seem sufficient reason for advocating sterilisation in well-known problem families. The Group raised funds to send two families with their children to the seaside in the summer, and the comparative immunity of the families from ailments during the winter appears to have justified the expenditure. It is hoped to repeat this again this summer for a longer period with a different pair of families. The Group was greatly helped in this by assistance from the Reading Dispensary Trust, the National Council of Women, the Sunday Cinema Fund, the Reading Inner Wheel and many other friends. Two adolescent girls also went to camp and it is hoped that this too may be extended this summer.

The membership of the Group is still confined to active members who are trained social workers and who are prepared to visit families regularly, and every day in a crisis. In addition to the two Family Case Workers there are four volunteer Case Workers headed by Mrs. Salzmann; a member of the National Council of Women looks after the store of clothing and bedding; the Organiser of the Home Making Centre at the Community Centre is also a member of the Group. The Children's Officer and Medical Officer of Health attend *ex officio*. The chairman, Mrs. M. K. Logan Dahne, gave evidence of the work of the Group before the Central Housing Advisory Committee which was incorporated in their annual report, "unsatisfactory tenants."

Co-operation with the Home Making Organiser at the Community Centre continues. Some mothers known to the Group and others on the fringe continue to attend make-do and mend classes with enthusiasm. A new cookery class for beginners

was started in the autumn. The Group subsidises the provision of tea and biscuits at these sessions.

APPENDIX

Reading Family Aid Group ... 20 families
1955

- I. *No. of families in receipt of N.A.B.* 17
Of those in receipt of N.A.B.
7 were sick
6 were unemployed
2 were widows
2 (deserted wives) received inadequate support from liable relatives
1 husband in prison

Total N.A.B. payments in 1955 £825 11s. 2d.
(to these 20 families)

Exceptional needs grants ... £25 19s. 1d.

Three highest maintenance payments were made to one deserted wife (no maintenance), one family where husband sick, one widow

II. *Contact with Social Agencies*

This includes N.A.B., Borough Treasurer's Department, Housing Department, M.D. Supervisor, Hospital Almoners, Probation Service, Children's Department, School Welfare, and Health Visitors.

The largest number of agencies in touch with a family was 7, the smallest number 2—not counting the Family Aid Group.

III. *Age Range of Children*

	1-5	5-10	10-15
Total	38	36	21
Boys	16	24	12
Girls	22	12	9

This reflects the "bulge" in the population as a whole. But these families tend to have more children than the population at large.

None of the families visited by the Group has less than five children.

Ten children are at E.S.N. school or awaiting a vacancy. This includes one awaiting a place at epileptic colony.

State of House

Good	...	...	...	6
Fair	...	...	...	12
Bad	...	...	...	2

Furniture and Bedding

Adequate	...	14
Inadequate	...	6

SECTION 29—DOMESTIC HELP

This Service continues to grow and has continued its good work. The Council again increased the budget for the financial year 1955-56 and this money was fully utilised. If I do not use a lot of space in this Report in describing the work of this

Service it is simply due to the fact that it is difficult to add to the previous tributes I have made to the excellent service provided.

A third Domestic Help Supervisor was engaged during the year (part-time) and also a part-time clerk.

(1) Number of domestic helps employed at the end of the year :

Whole-time	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Part-time	...	...	...	...	...	...	155

(2) Number of cases where domestic help was provided during the year :

Maternity cases	...	...	...	...	...	...	207
Tuberculosis cases	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
Chronic sick (including aged and infirm)	...	...	...	...	...	...	769
Others	...	...	...	...	...	...	214
							<hr/> 1,216 <hr/>

An interesting feature of the work of the Home Helps has been the number of meals which are supplied. It is tedious to keep exact figures of meals provided every day but, as a general rule, it can be said that they prepared just under 1,000 meals per week. This is in addition to the meals supplied by the W.V.S. under their Meals on Wheels scheme, which amount to just under 1,000 meals per month. By both these methods I feel that a sound attempt is being made to look after the nutrition of those people living in their own homes who are unable to cook for themselves.

SECTION 29—DOMESTIC HELP SERVICE

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Number of Householders helped at first day of period—												
(a) Part-time	511	526	539	527	552	550	551	548	555	570	584	586
(b) Full-time	2	4	2	2	5	3	2	2	2	3	3	1
Number of Householders helped at last day of period :—												
(a) Part-time	511	532	536	549	542	547	557	543	558	564	585	587
(b) Full-time	4	1	3	4	4	4	2	2	5	2	1	1
Source of New Applications :—												
(a) Direct application by Doctor	21	14	9	14	11	8	9	13	10	17	13	17
(b) " " Hospital	9	12	6	10	12	8	6	5	9	9	9	11
(c) " " Midwife	28	21	16	16	22	16	22	16	15	46	35	18
(d) " " Householder	19	26	14	19	15	12	11	6	15	18	12	11
(e) " " Welfare Worker	7	9	7	7	8	4	3	2	6	10	5	8
Classification of reasons for help being sought :—												
(a) Old age, infirmity and chronic sickness	38	43	22	39	31	18	21	15	26	37	27	24
(b) Acute sickness and convalescence	18	16	10	7	15	15	8	9	13	15	11	19
(c) Maternity cases (including miscarriages and discharges from hospital)	28	23	19	20	22	15	22	18	16	48	36	22
(d) Miscellaneous	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Number of cases where Helps unnecessary												
	15	15	10	8	10	7	9	4	12	7	7	2
Number of Householders receiving help for the first time during period :—												
(a) Part-time	45	65	38	56	56	43	42	34	48	60	49	56
(b) Full-time	7	5	5	3	8	7	11	2	6	4	1	5
Classification of reasons why Householders had received help for over one month at the end of period :—												
(a) Old age and infirmity and chronic sickness	417	422	446	459	464	461	483	459	476	488	497	497
(b) Acute sickness and convalescence	53	59	53	54	51	54	60	55	57	43	66	59
(c) Maternity cases (including miscarriages and discharges from hospital)	3	5	4	5	6	5	3	4	3	3	2	2
(d) Miscellaneous	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	3	2
Number of hours worked by part-time Helps during period												
	12871½	10933½	8054½	10614½	13996½	11039½	13957½	9640	10446	14348½	12297½	12410½
Number of part-time Helps employed at last day of period												
	128	135	143	141	149	147	144	147	153	149	155	155
Number of visits paid by Organisers :—												
(a) New cases	93	76	49	80	81	65	64	43	69	97	85	67
(b) Re-visits	213	77	73	154	271	280	353	289	304	238	299	335
Meals by Home Helps (commenced week ending 15. 5. 55)												
	..	..	..	..	934	895	879	775	817	955	1055	958

SECTION 51—MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE

1. Mental Illness.

(a) ADMINISTRATION. The general arrangements continued as outlined in the 1952 Report, viz. Mr. C. E. House acts as Duly Authorised Officer. He is relieved by Miss J. M. Robb, Mental Deficiency Officer, and Mr. D. Comerford, Clerical Assistant in the Welfare Section.

(b) REPORT BY DULY AUTHORISED OFFICER. Mr. House has submitted the following particulars about his work under the Lunacy and Mental Treatment Acts.

During the year the following have been received into various mental hospitals from Reading :—

<i>Lunacy Act, 1890</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Section 16—Certified under Summary Reception Order	12	34	46
Section 20—Removed under Duly Authorised Officers' Order—3 days	12	7	19
Section 21—Removed under Justices' Order—14 days	1	—	1
Section 21a—Persons removed under Section 20, whose Orders were extended for a further period of 14 days by Certificate of Hospital Medical Officer	8	5	13
Section 16—Certified under Summary Reception Order at expiration of Section 20 and Section 21a Orders	3	—	3
Persons examined by Justice but no Order made	5	3	8

Mental Treatment Act, 1930

Section 1—Voluntary Patients	43	72	115
Section 5—Temporary Patients	—	5	5

The following Reading patients have been regraded during their in-patient stay at Mental Hospitals :—

<i>From Lunacy Act, 1890</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Section 16—to Voluntary Class	—	1	1
Section 20—to Voluntary Class	3	1	4
Section 21—to Voluntary Class	1	—	1
Section 21a to Voluntary Class	4	3	7

From Mental Treatment Act, 1930

Section 5 (Temporary Class)—to Voluntary Class	—	1	1
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From Mental Treatment Act, 1930

Section 1 (Voluntary Class)—to Section 16, Lunacy Act, 1890 (Certified Class)	—	1	1
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The following Reading patients have left Mental Hospitals :—

<i>Lunacy Act, 1890</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Left hospital on trial period prior to discharge for a period of one month (4 or 5 weeks)	3	3	6
Discharged recovered at expiration of trial period	3	3	6
Discharged recovered without trial period	4	4	8
Discharged relieved	—	7	7

<i>Lunacy Act, 1890</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Discharge not improved	—	—	—
Discharged on expiration of Order under Section 20 ...	1	—	1
Discharged on expiration of Order under Section 21	—	—	—
Discharged on expiration of Order under Section 21a	—	2	2

Mental Treatment Act, 1930

Voluntary Patients—left hospital	39	77	116
Temporary Patients—left hospital	—	2	2

The following deaths have occurred amongst Reading patients in mental hospitals :—

<i>Lunacy Act, 1890</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Section 16	9	17	26
Section 20	1	—	1
Section 21a	1	—	1

Mental Treatment Act, 1930

Section 1	2	10	12
Section 5	—	2	2

Mr. House comments that an overall summary reveals that admissions to mental hospitals are increasing year by year. While the total admissions this year show only an increase of four compared with the previous twelve months, they were thirty-five greater than during 1950.

Perhaps the most pleasing feature of this report is the decreases shown in the number of admissions amongst elderly people. This does not mean however, that there is no problem to be answered. Loneliness seems to be one of the features of modern urban life, and is the main contributory cause for much mental ill-health within this group. One so often hears the phrase “ I keep myself to myself, I need privacy.” So many of the elderly folk we meet with present a moral puzzle. Should they be sent to a mental hospital, or should they be placed in old people’s homes ? It is true that if half-way houses for the senile dementias were provided it would impose a greater strain on local rates repayments, but national health costs would benefit. A new emphasis could be given to the treatment of younger patients in mental hospitals who could be cured. Taking the broad national view, as all of us who are directly concerned with the health services must, it is clear that such a reorientation would, in the long run, be more economic.

Work in the community generally reveals that mental illness is much more widespread than we are willing to admit. Whilst there is no doubt that the physical aspect of mental ill-health are important, it is the social factor which is the more important one and the one to which more attention should be given. Mental illness is in essence a social concept. A person whom one society would be regarded as a nuisance and therefore in need of treatment, would in another society be regarded just as pleasantly odd. Race, sex, economic status are all factors in mental illness. Mental health is a matter of being able to live both as an individual and as a member of a community, and unless we have the adaptation within the individual we shall never have good community members.

In all this there is need for close co-operation between the local health authority and the mental hospital. It is good to record the good liaison which has continued locally in dealing with the problem of improving the lot of those who suffer mental illness.

(c) **Reading Association for Mental Health.** After a year of inactivity this Voluntary Association held its Annual Meeting on the 22nd June, 1955, and in view of the small membership it was decided that the Association be terminated.

The small amount of funds possessed by the Association was sent to the National Association for Mental Health, towards the furtherance of their work.

2. Mental Deficiency.

As for last year, we must thank the Physician Superintendents of the Mental Deficiency Hospitals in this area for their kindness in admitting patients on a short term basis when emergencies have arisen in their homes. In 1955, 12 patients were dealt with in this way. It is also pleasing to record that 16 patients were admitted to Institutions during the year on a permanent basis. This has helped to reduce the waiting list although admission is not as quick in some cases as we would hope. I must, however, not appear ungrateful to the officers of the Regional Hospital Board. They have always been most sympathetic to our demands and any delays have been due to circumstances beyond their control.

I am also pleased to report that firm progress towards the extension of the Occupation Centre was made by the acquirement of premises at 40 Christchurch Road ; we hope that it will be open for the autumn term, 1956. We have admitted a number of new patients this year to our Occupation Centre but there is still a shortage of accommodation, which we hope will soon be relieved on the opening of the new Centre.

During the year we arranged for a party of 20 boys from the Occupation Centre to attend a week's camp in Kent. It proved so successful that arrangements are going forward for two camps next year—a party of boys in the early summer and a party of girls later on.

The employment of patients in Reading is still high and all those who are employable are fully employed and doing well. Again we must, to a very large extent, thank the Youth Employment Officers, the Disablement Rehabilitation Officer of the Ministry of Labour, and the Employers for their sympathetic help.

We have experimented in the form of a Social Club for those high-grade patients who are on Licence from Institutions and working in Reading, and certain of our statutory supervision patients who are fully employed during the day, but who are at a loss for something to do in their spare time. The club has now been established for a period of eight months and meets one evening each week. It has proved to be a great help to these patients, who look forward to their weekly meeting.

(1) Particulars of cases reported during 1955 :—

						Under age 16		Aged 16 and over	
						M.	F.	M.	F.
(a) Cases at 31st December, 1955, ascertained to be defectives "subject to be dealt with"									
Number in which action taken on reports by—									
(1) Local Education Authorities on children									
(i) While at school or liable to attend school						—	4	—	—
(ii) On leaving special schools						2	1	2	3
(iii) On leaving ordinary schools						1	—	—	—
(2) Police or by Courts						—	—	—	—
(3) Other sources						1	2	1	—
(b) Cases reported who were found to be defectives but were not, at 31st December, 1955, regarded as "subject to be dealt with" on any ground ...						—	—	—	—
(c) Cases reported who were not regarded as defectives or in which action was incomplete at 31st December, 1955, and are thus excluded from (a) or (b)						1	2	—	—
						5	9	3	3

(2) Disposal of cases reported during 1955 :—

(a) Of the cases ascertained to be defectives "subject to be dealt with" (i.e. at 1 (a)), number—									
(i) Placed under Statutory Supervision						4	6	3	3
(ii) Placed under Guardianship						—	—	—	—
(iii) Taken to "Places of Safety"						—	—	—	—
(iv) Admitted to Hospitals						—	1	—	—
(b) Of the cases not ascertained to be defectives "subject to be dealt with" (i.e. at 1 (b)), number—									
(i) Placed under voluntary supervision						—	—	—	—
(ii) Action not yet taken						1	2	—	—
						5	9	3	3

(3) Number of mental defectives for whom care was arranged by the Local Health Authority under Circular 5/52 during 1955 and admitted to :—

(a) National Health Service Hospitals						3	3	4	2
(b) Elsewhere						—	1	—	—
						3	4	4	2

(4) Total cases on Authority's Registers at 31st December, 1955 :—

				Under age 16		Aged 16 and over	
				M.	F.	M.	F.
(i)	Under Statutory Supervision	...	...	14	21	90	86
(ii)	Under Guardianship	...	...	—	—	10	3
(iii)	In "Places of Safety"	...	...	—	—	—	—
(iv)	In Hospitals	...	...	20	10	76	79
(v)	Under Voluntary Supervision	...	...	—	—	14	12
(vi)	Action not yet taken	...	...	1	2	—	—
				35	33	190	180

(5) Number of defectives under Guardianship on 31st December, 1955, who were dealt with under the provisions of Section 8 or 9, Mental Deficiency Act, 1913 (included in 4 (ii))

— — — —

(6) Classification of defectives in the Community on 31st December, 1955 (according to need at that date) :—

(a) Cases included in 4 (i)-(iii) in need of hospital care and reported accordingly to the hospital authority :—

(1) In urgent need of hospital care :—

(i)	"Cot and chair" cases	...	...	...	—	1	1	—
(ii)	Ambulant low-grade cases	...	...	...	—	1	—	—
(iii)	Medium-grade cases	...	...	...	2	—	3	2
(iv)	High-grade cases	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
Total urgent cases					2	2	4	2

(2) Not in urgent need of hospital care :—

(i)	"Cot and chair" cases	...	...	...	—	1	—	—
(ii)	Ambulant low grade cases	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(iii)	Medium grade cases	...	...	...	1	—	1	—
(iv)	High-grade cases	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
Total non-urgent cases					1	1	1	—
Total					3	3	5	2

(b) Of the cases included in items 4 (i), (ii) and (v), number considered suitable for :—

(i)	Occupation centre	...	...	...	13	15	18	29
(ii)	Industrial centre	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(iii)	Home training	...	...	...	—	2	—	—
Total					13	17	18	29

(c) Of the cases included in 6 (b), number receiving training on 31st December, 1955 :—

(i)	In occupation centre	...	...	...	11	14	18	24
(ii)	In industrial centre...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—
(iii)	At home	...	...	...	—	2	—	—
Total					11	16	18	24

Particulars of Mental Defectives as on 31st December, 1955 :—

(1) Cases " subject to be dealt with " :—

	M.	F.	T.
(a) Borocourt, 65 ; Brentry Colony, 5 ; Royal Earlswood, Surrey, 1 ; Wayland House, 29 ; St. Mary's, Alton, 1 ; Pewsey, 31 ; Botley's Park, 3 ; State Institutions, 9 ; Manor House, Aylesbury, 10 ; Normansfield, Teddington, 1 ; Wokingham Hospital, 2 ; Winslow Hospital, 3 ; Purley Park, 1 ; Agricultural Hostel, Newent, 1 ; Smith's Hospital, 1 ; Ravenswood 1	86	78	164
(b) On Licence from Institution Employed away from home — 14, employed living at home — 4, not employed — 3	10	11	21
(c) Under Guardianship Receiving National Assistance, 10 ; In employment, 3	10	3	13
(d) Under Statutory Supervision	104	107	211
(e) Action not yet taken	1	2	3

(2) Disposal of cases during 1955 :—

(a) Granted Licence from Institution	4	4	8
Returned from Licence to Institution	—	3	3
Died	3	4	7
Left the district	—	2	2
Discharged from Order	1	1	2
Released from Supervision	3	5	8
Admitted to Institutions	9	7	16
(b) Awaiting removal to Institutions	9	15	24

(3) Number of cases ascertained during 1955 :—

(a) Cases reported by Local Education Authority (Section 57 Education Act 1944)			
(1) Under Section 57 (3)	—	4	4
(2) Under Section 57 (5)			
On leaving Special School	4	4	8
On leaving Ordinary School	1	—	1
(b) Other ascertained defectives reported during 1955 found "subject to be dealt with"	2	2	4

(4) Cases not at present "subject to be dealt with":—

(a) Under Friendly Supervision	14	12	26
---------------------------------------	----	----	----

(5) Supervised on behalf of Other Authorities ...	2	18	20
---	---	----	----

(b) **Occupation Centre.** Classes have been held during the school terms from Mondays till Fridays.

Numbers attending as at 31st December, 1955	Males	Females	Total
From Borough	30	38	68
„ County			
Berkshire	2	—	2
Oxfordshire	1	—	1
			—
			71
			—

Staff

Supervisor

Four Assistant Supervisors (as from autumn term)

One Domestic Help, part-time (as from 28th February)

One Boot Repairing Instructor, 2 sessions weekly

Caretaker giving part-time gardening instruction and assistance with games.

Notes on Staff. On 1st January, Mr. A. Pearson resigned his post as caretaker and was replaced by Mr. J. Randall on 24th January. During the interim period Mr. A. H. Allen kindly took over the duties of caretaker. In June, Mrs. D. Bernard, Assistant Supervisor, Infants' Department, was accepted for admittance to the training course for teachers of the mentally handicapped. Mrs. Bernard began her training in September

Miss D. Manning was appointed to the staff last September to replace a vacancy.

Miss J. Stevens was also appointed to give assistance during Mrs. Bernard's absence. Her position will be reviewed later. I am pleased to report that Miss Stevens was awarded her diploma on 12th December, following a satisfactory test carried out at the Occupation Centre.

Transport. The same facilities have been provided as before: two special buses operating in :—

(a) Whitley area ;

(b) Oxford Road and Lower Caversham area.

Free bus tickets have been issued to 4 pupils not requiring escort and who reside in districts not covered by our buses.

On 28th November, Mrs. A. L. Winstone was appointed to escort a pupil from Mayfair, Tilehurst to the Centre. Owing to home difficulties this pupil presented an urgent need for admittance to the Centre. Both pupil and escort received free bus tickets.

Meals. A mid-day meal has been provided daily from Mondays till Fridays by means of the School Meals Service at a total cost of 1/6 per meal. Pupils have contributed 9d. per meal unless poor financial circumstances have justified free meals. The eligibility for free meals has been calculated on the school assessment basis. As at 31st December, 14 pupils have been receiving free meals.

School Milk. All pupils under 18 years of age are eligible for $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of pasteurised milk daily. Twenty-five pupils from the Centre have been participating in this scheme when present.

Use of School Clinic. As before, we have been indebted to the staff of the School Clinic for the following :—

(a) a routine medical inspection ;

(b) a monthly cleanliness inspection ;

(c) dental treatments and other necessary treatments ;

(d) speech therapy.

Curriculum. Instruction has been given in the following subjects :—

- (a) Religious knowledge ;
- (b) Handwork planned to meet requirements of all grades ;
- (c) Music and movement including Margaret Morris Movement ;
- (d) Percussion band and singing ;
- (e) Speech training ;
- (f) Cookery : one session weekly for senior girls ;
- (g) Games : one session weekly at Palmer Park for senior boys.

Special Activities :—

- (a) *Football.* On 30th March and on 5th October, “ away ” matches were played at Borocourt. The teams were well matched and our boys enjoyed the games. Our thanks are due to Borocourt staff for their kind hospitality in providing excellent teas after each match.

Students. This year we have been pleased to accept students in training for the Diploma for Teachers of the Mentally Handicapped.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

The table on page 64 gives particulars of notifications of infectious diseases received during the year. These figures include patients who are not normally resident in the Borough. It will be seen that 1955 was a "measles" year. Apart from that I do not think that there are any special items for consideration.

Diphtheria. For the seventh year in succession there has been no case of diphtheria in the Borough.

Scarlet Fever. The notifications again showed a sharp decrease from the previous year. The majority of cases appeared to be of a very mild type and I know that in some instances there has been some doubt in the minds of general practitioners as to whether or not they were justified in notifying them as cases of scarlet fever.

Whooping Cough. The actual numbers show an increase on last year although the total of 163 notified cases must be recorded as a small number for a town the size of Reading. The following table gives particulars of the notifications of whooping cough since 1939 :—

WHOOPIING COUGH NOTIFICATIONS

Year	0-1 year	1-3 years	3-5 years	5+
1939	—	2	1	5
1940	2	12	16	26
1941	25	77	85	119
1942	7	13	15	10
1943	19	36	38	21
1944	11	32	28	27
1945	2	37	25	12
1946	15	56	24	3
1947	12	34	30	33
1948	14	37	37	40
1949	26	56	69	65
1950	8	21	40	48
1951	23	46	78	111
1952	23	53	66	113
1953	13	29	32	62
1954	8	20	14	38
1955	16	40	39	68

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1955, CLASSIFIED IN AGE GROUPS

Notifiable Disease	Number of Cases Notified									
	At all ages	Age Groups								Unknown
		Under 1 year	1 and under 3 years	3 and under 5 years	5 and under 10 years	10 and under 14 years	14 and under 25 years	25 and under 45 years	45 and under 65 years	65 and over
Scarlet Fever ...	59	3	2	10	33	7	2	—	2	—
Whooping Cough ...	163	16	40	39	51	11	1	3	2	—
Diphtheria ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles ...	1757	37	334	470	877	24	7	8	—	—
Acute Pneumonia (Primary or Influenzal)	76	—	8	2	8	1	5	11	14	27
Cerebro Spinal Fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	5	—	2	—	1	—	1	—	1	—
Acute Poliomyelitis (Non-Paralytic)	4	—	—	—	1	—	2	1	—	—
Acute Encephalitis (Infective)	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	25	—	—	—	—	—	11	14	—	—
Smallpox ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Paratyphoid ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enteric or Typhoid Fevers (excluding Paratyphoid)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Food Poisoning ...	23	—	1	3	2	—	1	8	5	3
Erysipelas ...	11	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	5	3
Malaria ...	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Cholera ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Plague ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Typhus ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Relapsing Fever ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dysentery ...	20	—	4	1	5	4	1	2	—	3
Meningococcal Infections ...	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tuberculosis (Pulmonary)	131	—	2	1	4	5	30	60	23	6
Tuberculosis (Non-Pulmonary)	7	—	—	—	1	—	1	2	2	—
Totals	2285	58	393	526	984	52	64	111	54	42
...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1

Measles. 1955 was a measles year although most of the cases appeared to be fairly mild.

Food Poisoning. No outbreaks of food poisoning were reported during the year. The 23 cases reported were isolated cases and it was not possible to incriminate any particular article of food. In point of fact, most of them arose as the result of the receipt of a bacteriological report on a specimen of faeces. It is probably true to say that if this bacteriological examination had not been called for there would have been no notification of food poisoning.

Poliomyelitis. During 1955 there were 5 confirmed cases of poliomyelitis affecting Reading residents and notified within the Borough. Four of these were non-paralytic ; the 1 paralytic case was a woman of 53 who subsequently died from complications.

Two cases were erroneously notified as poliomyelitis and were later found to be osteomyelitis with staphylococcal septicaemia and acute infective polyneuritis respectively.

Two other cases of paralytic poliomyelitis notified concerned people who were residing in the borough only temporarily as hospital patients and they are not included in the numbers.

Tables 1 to 5 show the incidence of notified cases of non-paralytic and paralytic poliomyelitis, according to age and sex, affecting Reading residents during the past five years.

TABLE 1

Year 1951	Non-paralytic cases		Paralytic cases		Deaths		Total cases in each age group
Age Group	M	F	M	F	M	F	
0-5+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6-11+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1-4+ years	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
5-9+ years	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
10-14+ years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-19+ years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20-24+ years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 years and over ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total of males and females in each category ...	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
Grand Total	1		1		—		2

TABLE 2

Year 1952	Non-paralytic cases		Paralytic cases		Deaths		Total cases in each age group
Age Group	M	F	M	F	M	F	
0-5+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6-11+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1-4+ years	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
5-9+ years	1	—	1	2	1	—	5
10-14+ years	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
15-19+ years	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
20-24+ years	—	—	—	3	—	—	3
25 years and over ...	—	—	1	—	—	1	2
Total of males and females in each category	1	1	4	5	1	1	—
Grand Total ...	2		9		2		13

TABLE 3

Year 1953	Non-paralytic cases		Paralytic cases		Deaths		Total cases in each age group
Age Group	M	F	M	F	M	F	
0-5+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6-11+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1-4+ years	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
5-9+ years	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
10-14+ years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-19+ years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20-24+ years	1	—	—	1	—	—	2
25 years and over	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Total of males and females in each category	1	—	—	4	—	—	—
Grand Total ...	1		4		—		5

1954—NO CASES

TABLE 5

Year 1955	Non-paralytic cases		Paralytic cases		Deaths		Total cases in each age group
Age Group	M	F	M	F	M	F	
0-5+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6-11+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1-4+ years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-9+ years	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
10-14+ years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-19+ years	1	1	—	—	—	—	2
20-24+ years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 years and over ...	1	—	—	—	—	1	2
Total of males and females in each category ...	3	1	—	—	—	1	—
Grand Total ...	4		—		1		5

Table 6 illustrates the comparative annual incidence of poliomyelitis:—

TABLE 6

Year	1951		1952		1953		1954		1955		Total
Age Group	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
0-5+ months ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6-11+ months	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1-4+ years ...	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	3
5-9+ years ...	—	1	3	2	—	1	—	—	1	—	8
10-14+ years ...	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
15-19+ years ...	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	1	3
20-24+ years ...	—	—	—	3	1	1	—	—	—	—	5
25 years and over	—	—	1	1	—	1	—	—	1	1	5
Total males and females in each year	1	1	6	7	1	4	—	—	3	2	—
Grand Total	2		13		5		—		5		25

Follow up of all paralytic cases over a 5 year period shows that the present situation with regards to the employment of adults affected is as follows:—

TABLE 7

Year of onset of illness	Fully restored to normal activities		Resumed normal occupation with slight difficulty		Resumed normal occupation with considerable difficulty		Severely disabled and not working		Not traced	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1951	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1952	1	2	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—
1953	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1954	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1955	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

TUBERCULOSIS

These remarks should be read in conjunction with those under Section 28 of the National Health Service Act. The following table shows the number of primary notifications of cases of tuberculosis and the number of deaths due to the disease since 1948.

Year	Number of Cases notified		Notification Rate per 100,000 of population		Number of deaths		Death Rate per 1,000 of population		Population
	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary	
1928-37 Average	117	22	—	—	76	15	0.76	0.15	—
1938	91	31	90.63	30.87	58	6	0.58	0.05	100,400
1939	95	40	94.43	39.76	52	12	0.50	0.10	100,600
1940	117	30	102.09	26.18	74	18	0.66	0.16	114,600
1941	137	50	109.77	40.06	68	16	0.54	0.13	124,800
1942	186	40	157.89	33.95	60	10	0.51	0.08	117,800
1943	185	30	163.71	26.54	57	13	0.51	0.11	113,000
1944	135	29	121.25	26.04	55	14	0.49	0.13	111,340
1945	119	16	109.34	14.69	60	12	0.55	0.11	108,830
1946	152	25	136.51	22.49	73	11	0.65	0.09	111,340
1947	168	27	148.72	23.90	70	6	0.62	0.05	112,960
1948	132	24	115.28	20.92	50	12	0.43	0.10	114,500
1949	130	9	112.65	7.80	35	6	0.30	0.05	115,500
1950	143	10	123.52	8.64	39	3	0.34	0.03	115,770
1951	115	3	99.91	2.61	34	—	0.29	0.00	115,100
1952	128	12	110.54	10.36	22	2	0.19	0.02	115,800
1953	96	26	81.56	22.09	20	4	0.17	0.03	117,700
1954	85	5	71.85	4.22	6	2	0.05	0.02	118,300
1955	131	7	110.92	5.92	9	1	0.07	0.01	118,100

In this work we have worked very closely with Dr. Karlsh, Consultant Chest Physician, and I am pleased to pay tribute to the ready manner in which he an

his staff have co-operated with my department during the year. Dr. Karlish has been good enough to supply a number of tables and other information which is incorporated in the following pages of this report.

It will be seen that there is an increase in the number of primary notifications as compared with 1954. Naturally we have examined very closely the possible causes for this increase. In part it is due to the intensive survey carried out by the Mass Radiography Unit in the course of which 22,000 people were X-rayed. As a result of the close liaison which exists between general practitioners and the hospital service, we feel that the number of minimal cases have been noted which might have escaped diagnosis in areas which do not have the extensive screening and bacteriological facilities which we have in Reading. It should also be noted that the proportion of advanced cases is diminishing year by year. This is a pleasing and significant feature and it certainly suggests that an impact is being made on the reservoir of infection which may exist in the town. Dr. Karlish tells me that it is unusual to notify any case from which it is not possible to obtain a positive sputum at some stage or other and this helps to dispose of any suggestion that a new case may have really been suffering from some other condition.

The installation of an Odelca camera at the Clinic in June 1955, was very much welcomed. This replaced the old screening clinic. Altogether 2,342 cases were seen and of these 498 were recalled for further examination. From this number 69 cases of tuberculosis were diagnosed, including 32 sputum positive respiratory cases. Amongst the diagnosis other than tuberculosis there were 13 cases of bronchial carcinoma. The following table gives particulars of new cases (including transfers) seen at the Chest Clinic during 1955.

Primary Notifications. Primary notifications in 1955 were 138 compared with 95 in 1954. Of the 138, 131 were respiratory cases and of these 101 were positive. Non-respiratory notifications went up from 3 to 7 in 1955. The increase over the year can be largely attributed to the intensive survey carried out by mass radiography in Reading in the course of which 22,000 people were X-rayed.

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY NOTIFICATIONS, 1955

	M.M.R.	Contacts	Fluoroscopy/ Odelca	Doctors' Cases	Hospitals	Other	Totals
Respiratory Tuberculosis :							
<i>Primary Tuberculosis :</i>							
Positive	—	1	—	—	1	—	2
Negative	1	2	—	1	1	—	5
<i>Tuberculous Pleural Effusion:</i>							
Positive	1	—	1	1	4	1	8
Negative	—	2	2	2	1	—	7
<i>Pulmonary Tuberculosis:</i>							
R.B. 1	18	6	13	3	3	5	48
R.B. 2	10	2	13	4	5	—	34
R.B. 3	—	—	5	3	1	—	9
R.A. 1	8	1	3	1	1	—	14
R.A. 2	1	—	1	—	2	—	4
R.A. 3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total Respiratory Tuberculosis	39	14	38	15	19	6	131
Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis	—	—	—	1	6	—	7
Total Tuberculous Cases ...	39	14	38	16	25	6	138

New Cases of Tuberculosis, including Transfers. The table below includes all new cases of tuberculosis seen, both notified and not notified, the majority of the latter being so-called P.T. Observation or apparently inactive cases.

SOURCE AND TYPE OF NEW CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS
1st January to 31st December, 1955

	M.M.R.	Contact	Fluoroscropy/ Odelca	Doctors' Cases	Hospitals	Transfers from other areas	Other	Totals
Respiratory Tuberculosis :								
<i>Primary Tuberculosis :</i>								
Positive	—	1	—	—	1	1	—	3
Negative	4	5	15	4	1	—	3	32
<i>Tuberculous Pleural Effusion :</i>								
Positive	1	—	1	1	4	1	1	9
Negative	—	2	3	2	2	1	—	10
<i>Pulmonary Tuberculosis :</i>								
Positive	28	8	31	10	9	22	5	113
Negative	30	1	8	5	3	6	3	56
“ Observation ”	41	1	4	1	2	—	3	52
“ Inactive ”	14	—	6	4	—	—	3	27
	118	18	68	27	22	31	18	302
Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis	—	—	1	1	8	1	—	11
Total Tuberculous Cases ...	118	18	69	28	30	32	18	313

Number and Distribution of New Sputum Positive Respiratory Cases

The following table shows the number and distribution of new positive cases since 1950.

Year	Number of Cases	*B.1 per cent	*B.2 per cent	*B.3 per cent
1950	102	27	43	30
1951	108	32	54	14
1952	100	39	50	11
1953	121	40	45	15
1954	92	39	45	16
1955	101	58	34	9

* Ministry of Health Classification

Analysis of this table shows that the total number has remained steady since 1950, but there is a definite shift to less advanced disease. B.1 cases have gone up from 27% of the total in 1950 to 58% in 1955, while B.3 cases have gone down from 30% to 9% of all cases.

TOTAL PRIMARY NOTIFICATIONS, 1955—ACCORDING TO AGE GROUP ON ADMISSION

Age Group on Admission	Primary Tuberculosis		Pleural Effusions		Pulmonary Tuberculosis					Non-Resp. Tuberculosis		Totals	
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive			Negative		Pos.	Neg.	Males	Females
					1	2	3	1	2					3
0-14	— 2	1 2	1 —	1 —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— 1	3 —	— 6
15-24	— —	— 1	— 2	— 1	1 5	1 1	1 1	— —	1 —	— —	2 —	16 —	— 18
25-34	— —	— —	— —	2 2	4 4	— —	3 3	— —	— —	— —	1 —	20 —	— 13
35-44	— —	— 1	1 2	— —	4 2	3 —	3 1	1 —	— —	— —	1 1	19 —	— 9
45-54	— —	— —	1 1	— —	2 2	2 —	2 —	— —	2 —	— —	1 —	12 —	— 5
55 and over	— —	— —	— —	1 —	6 4	2 —	— —	— —	— —	— —	— —	12 —	— 5
Totals	2	5	8	7	48	34	9	14	4	—	—	82	56
											138		

New Contacts Examined. 444 new contacts were examined, representing 4.4 contacts per new sputum positive case. 18 of these were found to be tuberculous, including 9 positive cases.

B.C.G. Vaccinations. 203 contacts were B.C.G. vaccinated in 1955. This brings the total number of cases vaccinated in the Reading Borough since 1950 to 1,311.

Cases T.B. Positive, July-December, 1955. Cases on the register which had positive sputum during the six months ended 31st December, 1955, were :—

Males	...	...	...	...	45
Females	...	...	...	...	21
Children	...	...	...	...	5
Total					71

Domiciliary Treatment. An average of 58.6 patients per week received chemotherapy at home, compared with 41 in 1954.

194 home visits were made by the medical staff and 2,989 visits by the two tuberculosis visitors.

Non-Tuberculous Cases. The number of cases of non-tuberculous chest disease referred to the clinic by general practitioners has continued to rise, reflecting the improved status of the clinic and the anxiety felt at the growing incidence of bronchial carcinoma. There is also increasing awareness of the importance of chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

760 non-tuberculous cases were investigated and an analysis of diagnoses made is given in the following table.

ANALYSIS OF NON-TUBERCULOUS CASES FIRST SEEN DURING 1955

Diagnosis					No.
No organic disease	...	...	...	...	99
Anxiety states	...	...	...	...	5
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	110
Chronic bronchitis and emphysema	...	...	...	...	278
Bronchiectasis	...	...	...	...	37
Bronchial carcinoma	...	...	...	...	37
Unexplained haemoptysis	...	...	...	...	10
Asthma	...	...	...	...	12
Pleurisy	...	...	...	...	2
Spontaneous pneumothorax	...	...	...	...	6
Other pulmonary conditions	...	...	...	...	26
Upper respiratory infections	...	...	...	...	23
Cardiac disease	...	...	...	...	41
Other diseases	...	...	...	...	48
Diagnoses not completed	...	...	...	...	3
Cases under observation	...	...	...	...	23
Total					760

**SUMMARY OF TUBERCULOUS CASES REMAINING ON
CLINIC REGISTER at 31st December, 1955**

Diagnosis	Males	Females	Totals
Respiratory Tuberculosis :			
<i>Primary Tuberculosis :</i>			
T.B. Positive	3	8	11
T.B. Negative	29	37	66
<i>Tuberculous Pleural Effusions :</i>			
T.B. Positive	12	17	29
T.B. Negative	43	26	69
<i>Pulmonary Tuberculosis :</i>			
T.B. Positive, Group I. ...	137	115	252
II. ...	240	153	393
III. ...	64	50	114
T.B. Negative, Group I. ...	95	123	218
II. ...	49	31	80
III. ...	1	4	5
“ Observation ” }	46	22	68
“ Inactive ” }			
	719	586	1305
Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis :			
T.B. Positive	4	1	5
T.B. Negative	34	36	70
Total Tuberculous Cases	757	623	1380

Care and After-Care. Reference to this important subject will be found in my remarks on our work under Section 28 of the National Health Service Act.

VENEREAL DISEASE

Patients suffering from venereal disease in Reading are treated at the Clinic of the Royal Berkshire Hospital which also serves a large part of the surrounding countryside. The following are details of patients from Reading who attended for the first time in 1955 :—

Syphilis	3
Gonorrhoea	16
Other conditions	76

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

WATER. Mr. O. Kean, M.I.C.E., M.I.Mech.E., M.I.W.E., Water Engineer, has been good enough to supply the following information :—

1. During the year ended 31st December, 1955, the water supply of the area and of its several parts has been satisfactory both in quality and quantity. Certain difficulties have, however, been experienced in maintaining adequate pressures, particularly in the higher districts to the north and south-east of the area of supply and this point is dealt with under the heading of Capital Works, in paragraph 6.

2. The chemical and bacteriological examination of water was continued in the Department's Laboratory at Tilehurst during the year, with samples taken at all stages in the treatment processes, and from the distribution system. In addition, samples were submitted at regular intervals for independent examination by the Counties Public Health Laboratories. The numbers of samples from each point, together with the type of examination made, are set out below :—

A. *By the Counties Public Health Laboratories*

Source	Type of Water	Number of Samples	
		Full Bact.	Full Chemical
Fobney Works ...	Final water chlorinated	4	4
Southcote Works ...	Final water chlorinated	4	4
Pangbourne Works	Raw water ...	4	4
Pangbourne Works	Final water chlorinated	4	—
		16	12

B. *By the Water Department Laboratory*

Source	Type of Water	Number of Samples		
		Full Bact.	Full Chem.	Partial Chem.
Fobney Works ...	Raw River water ...	26	12	14
	After prefilters ...	4	4	—
	Individual filtrates ...	12	—	12
	Bulked filtrate, unchlorinated ...	50	12	38
	Final water, chlorinated	99	12	87
Southcote Works ...	Final water, chlorinated	101	12	89
Pangbourne Works	Raw water ...	53	50	3
	Final water, chlorinated	69	12	57
Bath Road Works Reservoir ...	As distributed ...	50	12	38
Tilehurst Water Tower ...	As distributed ...	32	1	31
Parfitt Reservoirs...	As distributed ...	23	—	23
Hill Reservoirs ...	As distributed ...	9	—	9
Tap Samples ...	As distributed ...	51	1	50
Tilehurst Tower ...	Not in use ...	4	—	4
	Totals ...	583	128	455

In all, therefore, 1,194 water examinations were made during the year, 28 by the Counties Public Health Laboratories, and 1,166 in the Water Department Laboratory.

Final water samples proved satisfactory, with organisms of the coliform group absent from 100 mls. with the exception of one slightly sub-standard sample taken from a consumer's tap, where vegetation—derived organisms, not harmful in themselves, were detected in minimal numbers.

The following are submitted as being typical reports. The well supply is clear and bright in appearance, of a high standard of bacterial purity, and requires only precautionary chlorination in the way of treatment. The river source, on the other hand, is greatly affected by seasonal and climatic conditions, and requires carefully controlled treatment by filtration and chlorination to produce a pure and wholesome final water.

RIVER KENNET SOURCE

	Raw Water				Final Water
Appearance	Slightly opalescent, but with very little colour, and a small deposit containing mineral particles, with some diatoms and algae threads				Clear and bright
Colour (Hazen)	Filtered : 7	...	...	...	Nil
Turbidity (Silica Scale) ...	11	...	...	...	Nil
Odour	Nil	...	...	...	Nil
pH	8.1	...	...	...	7.7
Chlorides	13.5	...	...	...	14.0
Hardness : Total	250	...	...	...	240
„ Carbonate (Temporary)	220	...	...	...	215
„ Non-carbonate (Permanent) ...	30	...	...	...	25
Nitrates	2.7	...	...	...	2.7
Nitrites	0.01	...	...	...	Absent
Free Ammonia (N)	0.025	...	...	...	0.000
Albuminoid Ammonia (N)	0.160	...	...	...	0.045
Iron	0.12	...	...	...	Less than 0.02
Other metals	Absent	...	...	...	Absent
Free Carbon Dioxide ...	Trace	...	...	...	5
Total Solids, dried at 180° C.	290	...	...	...	285
Alkalinity	220	...	...	...	215
Oxygen Absorbed in 4 hours at 27° C.	1.35	...	...	...	0.45
Residual Chlorine ... ..	—	...	...	...	0.45
<i>Bacteriological Results—</i>					
No. of colonies developing per ml. on agar in :—					
1 day at 37° C.	500	...	...	...	11
2 days at 37° C.	950	...	...	...	16
3 days at 22° C.	11,000	...	...	...	14
<i>Presumptive Coliform Reaction</i>					
Present in	0.01 mls.	...	...	...	—
Absent from	0.001 mls.	...	...	...	100 mls.
Probable No. per 100 mls.	2,000	...	...	...	0
<i>Bact. Coli (Type I) :—</i>					
Present in	0.1 mls.	...	...	...	—
Absent from	0.01 mls.	...	...	...	100 mls.
Probable No. per 100 mls. ...	350	...	...	...	0

PANGBOURNE WELL SOURCE

	Raw Water				Final Water
Appearance	Clear and bright ...				Clear and bright
Colour (Hazen)	Nil	...	...	...	Nil
Turbidity (Silica Scale) ...	Nil	...	...	...	Nil
Odour	Nil	...	...	...	Faint, chlorinous
pH	7.0	...	...	...	7.0
Chlorides	13.0	...	...	...	13.0
Hardness : Total	290	...	...	...	290
„ Carbonate (Temporary)	255	...	...	...	255
„ Non-carbonate (Permanent)	35	...	...	...	35
Nitrates	4.8	...	...	...	4.8
Nitrites	Absent	...	...	...	Absent
Free Ammonia (N)	0.000	...	...	...	0.000
Albuminoid Ammonia (N)	0.005	...	...	...	0.000
Iron	Nil	...	...	...	Nil
Other metals	Absent	...	...	...	Absent
Free Carbon Dioxide	34	...	...	...	34
Total Solids, dried at 180° C	345	...	...	...	345
Alkalinity... ..	255	...	...	...	255
Oxygen Absorbed in 4 hours at 27° C.	0.05	...	...	...	0.00
Residual Chlorine ... ..	—	...	...	...	0.3
<i>Bacteriological Results</i>					
No. of Colonies developing per ml. on Agar in :—					
1 day at 37° C.	1	...	...	...	0
2 days at 37° C.	2	...	...	...	1
3 days at 22° C.	3	...	...	...	1
Presumptive Coliform Re- action :—					
Present in ... ..	—	...	...	...	—
Absent from	100 mls.	...	...	...	100 mls.
Bact. Coli (Type I) :—					
Present in ... ..	—	...	...	...	—
Absent from	100 mls.	...	...	...	100 mls.

3. The water has no plumbo-solvent action and no special precautions are required in this respect.

4. During the year under review there were no instances of abnormal contamination or pollution of the sources from which water is abstracted and the routine measures comprising filtration, chlorination, tests for residual chlorine and regular analyses proved adequate to maintain a satisfactory standard of purity.

5. The estimated total population supplied from the Corporation's mains in the whole area of supply was 128,380, and the total quantity of water supplied for all purposes during the year was 2,262,795,000 gallons.

The number of dwellinghouses, together with other premises having domestic occupation, supplied from the Corporation's mains was 35,403 at 31st March, 1955. Of this number 35,334 were supplied direct and the remaining 69 were supplied by means of standpipes.

According to my records 19 houses within the Borough do not take a supply from the Corporation's mains but are supplied from private wells.

6. *Capital Works.* Due to the erection of housing estates and industrial development during recent years, the trunk and distribution main system has

gradually become overloaded, with the result that water supplies in the higher districts to the north and south-east of the area of supply are adversely affected at times of peak demand. Some indication of the extent of the above-mentioned development is afforded by the fact that during the past five years we have laid an average length of nearly 7,000 yards per year of new distribution mains.

A scheme of alterations and improvements to the distribution system was formulated in 1951 and subsequently approved. Despite many delays, at the end of the year under review the technical and financial preliminaries for Stage I of the scheme were well advanced. This Stage includes a new reservoir, water tower and booster station at Emmer Green and various trunk mains, at an estimated total cost of £104,000, and it is expected that constructional work on the major items will be well in hand by the middle of 1956.

During 1955 the construction of a new maintenance depot at Berkeley Avenue was commenced, at an estimated cost of £61,500. This depot, which comprises stores, garages, workshops, etc., should be completed early in 1956 and will replace the obsolete and inadequate buildings at our present depot in Thorn Lane.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

Mr. J. Green, Chief Sanitary Inspector, reports as follows :—

The year under review was a difficult one for the Sanitary Inspectors' Section of the Department. Even so, it is felt that much useful work was done and a fair degree of progress achieved. There was increased activity with regard to housing and meat and food inspection, supervision of milk supplies were maintained and a little more attention was given to atmospheric pollution and food hygiene. General sanitation is an aspect of the work which is constantly with us and attention to drainage work, complaints and routine visits, has accounted for an appreciable part of the inspectors' time.

Staff shortages have become more acute ; considerable staff changes too, increased the difficulties of the section. The decision last year to include in the establishment a number of senior sanitary inspectors, was a timely one, since there is no doubt that these appointments averted a staff position more serious than the one existing at the end of the year. It is disappointing to report that the scheme for student sanitary inspectors has not attracted the recruits we had hoped for. Although several advertisements have appeared there has not been one valid application in the last two years.

The general public appear to be coming increasingly aware of the need for smoke abatement. A number of time absorbing jobs arose during the course of the year and in the main were satisfactorily dealt with. It is desirable, however, that smoke abatement should receive more attention than is possible to give it at present. An endeavour will be made to extend this work as soon as circumstances permit.

The trend for increased through-put at the Abattoirs continued during 1955. The new annexe in Abattoirs Road was completed and operated experimentally for the latter part of the year. Saturday and Sunday killing which continued throughout the year has resulted in long hours being worked by the Meat Inspectors. An encouraging feature of the report is the continued fall shown in the incidence of tuberculosis in cows ; it may be a reflection of the good work being done in the field and in many ways towards the eradication of this disease.

The whole of the staff continued their help and support throughout the year for which I am most grateful.

The report is presented in a similar way to last year in four parts :—

1. Housing
2. Food Administration
3. Nuisances and work under the Public Health Act
4. General

1. HOUSING

Slum Clearance. The housing survey and report required by the Housing Rents and Repairs Act 1954 were completed and approved by the Council at its meeting in August. Some 499 houses were considered to be unfit for human habitation to such an extent as to warrant action being taken under the Housing Act 1936—by clearance area action, individual demolition orders or closing orders. The Council's programme for slum clearance which has been agreed by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government is designed to deal with the problem expeditiously in five years, with as little interference as possible with the housing needs of other deserving sections of the community. Fifty are to be dealt with in the first year after which the figure will be successively increased each year by an additional 25 houses. The figure for the final year will thus be 150. Of course much depends

upon the extent of the housing building which, it is hoped, will not be affected unduly by the increasingly difficult economic situation.

No clearance areas were put forward during the year but preparation went on with a view to a start being made in the coming year.

Proceedings under the Housing Act, 1936—Section 11. The under-mentioned houses were represented during the year by the Medical Officer of Health as being unfit for human habitation :—

87 Addington Road, 39 Coley Place, 77 Field Road, 1 Hope Street, 66 Soho Street, 1, 3 and 6 Garrard Square, 1 Hope Place, 20 Rose Hill Cottages, 216 Whitley Wood Lane, 195 Wokingham Road.

In six cases the houses were closed in accordance with the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953, as it was considered inexpedient at the time to require their demolition because of the possible effect on adjoining houses. Demolition Orders under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936 were placed on the remainder, one of the orders being later suspended on an "undertaking to make fit" being given by the owner. Three Demolition Orders were substituted for Closing Orders so as to enable all the houses in Garrard Square to be demolished. Numbers 55, 57, 59 and 61 Field Road houses, which for several years were subject to the owners undertaking not to re-let, were demolished during the year.

Repair of Houses. The work of ensuring that dwellinghouses are maintained in a state of repair fit for human habitation is an important duty of the sanitary inspectors. Although it was not possible to effect systematic routine inspection this work continued mostly on the receipt of complaints or as a result of general observations. In this connection 765 dwellinghouses were inspected during the year and 287 preliminary notices were served. There were 2,543 re-inspections for the purpose of supervising works in progress, interviewing owners and builders and generally securing compliance with the notices served. Property owners have responded well, generally, to the service of intimation notices although it was necessary to serve statutory notices in 81 cases. Thirty-nine of these were served under the Housing Act, 1936 and 42 under the Public Health Act 1936. Experience during the year suggests that building labour for repair works is not quite so difficult as in the past few years. It is quite clear, however, that the high cost of repairs is a real deterrent to thorough house maintenance, the tendency being to do only the essential repairs.

Some 248 houses were made fit during the year either by the owner or by the Corporation in default. There were eleven instances where it was necessary for the Corporation to do the work in default of the owner where statutory notices had not been complied with. The cost of the works involved was £338 13s. 6d., some three cases were outstanding at the end of the year.

Certificates of Disrepair. During the year 25 applications were received for Certificates of Disrepair. Certificates were granted in 22 cases, while 3 were refused.

Information re Local Land Charges, etc. Information relating to dwellinghouses as regards outstanding notices and their position with respect to slum clearance was supplied in very many cases upon request for official search of the Land Charges Register.

Details of properties were also supplied in connection with mortgages being arranged under the Housing Act, 1949 in respect of the purchase of small dwellings.

Overcrowding. It would appear that the progress which has been made in the erection of new houses is easing slightly the overcrowding problems. Although

the number of complaints received by the department is still appreciable, on the whole they reveal conditions somewhat less acute than was the case, say, two years ago. Numerous reports on housing conditions were submitted to the Housing Department for their information and subsequent action. Reports were also furnished to other Local Authorities in respect of applicants on their list who resided in the County Borough of Reading.

Underground Rooms. During the year the Ministry of Housing and Local Government issued new model regulations to be applied to underground rooms used for human habitation. The regulations dealt with lighting, ventilation, drainage and measures to guard against dampness. The underground room problem in Reading is not yet fully known although a number of cases are being dealt with as they arise, i.e. in connection with plans submitted to the Borough Surveyor in respect of improvements to existing houses, or where cases of unsatisfactory living conditions are brought to the notice of the department. This is an aspect of housing work which requires investigation and some action, and will be attended to as far as possible.

Houses let-in-lodgings. The Housing Rents and Repairs Act of 1954, Section 11, empowers a Local Authority to require the persons having control of a house which is let-in-lodgings, or occupied by members of more than one family, to make the house fit for habitation having regard to the number of individuals or households, or both, who are accommodated for the time being on the premises. The Local Authority also have power, subject to appeal, to limit the number of individuals living on the premises or the number of households accommodated there. It is known that there is a problem in Reading in connection with houses occupied by more than one family and it is proposed to report on the matter to the Housing Committee as soon as the current investigation is complete.

A Summary of Housing repair work under the Housing and Public Health Acts

Number of inspections for the purpose of the Housing Consolidated Regulations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	722
Number of general inspections	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	765
Number of revisits	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,543
Number of Preliminary notices served	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	287
Number of Preliminary Notices complied with					...	...	...	248
Number of Statutory Notices served under the Housing Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	39
Number of Statutory Notices (Housing Act) complied with by :—								
Owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	34
Local Authority in default					...	...	...	9
Number of Statutory Notices served under the Public Health Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	42
Number of Statutory Notices (Public Health Act) complied with by :—								
Owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	29
Local Authority in default					...	...	...	2
Number of Houses made fit	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	252

2. FOOD ADMINISTRATION

Work in connection with the inspection and sampling of food, food handling and the inspection of food premises of all kinds, forms a large part of the Sanitary Inspector's duties. Reading too is the centre of a food distributive area which extends far beyond the town, consequently food trade activities here are probably much greater than those in many other towns of a similar size.

Particulars of the work of the Department in respect of this matter are presented in the same way as last year, as follows :—

- (a) Slaughterhouse and Inspection of Meat.
- (b) Unwholesome Food Condemned.
- (c) Milk.
- (d) Ice Cream.
- (e) Food Handling.
- (f) Sampling, Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

(a) *SLAUGHTERHOUSES AND INSPECTION OF MEAT*

The first flush of decontrol had died away by the beginning of the year and the meat trade is back on a more hard and competitive basis. The availability of supplies, changes in consumer demand, weather conditions, and indeed occasions of industrial strife are factors in the meat trade which show quickly on through-put at slaughterhouses. Reading is no exception to these circumstances. Slaughtering, therefore, followed no day-by-day set pattern, except to a limited extent perhaps for local trade, and Meat Inspectors were obliged to work hours both early and late to deal with the fluctuating conditions of slaughtering. Saturday and Sunday killing, of course, has been a regular feature throughout the year and this has meant a continual strain on the meat inspection resources of the Department.

The new Annexe in Abattoirs Road intended for killing small animals, was completed, and although no agreement had been reached with regard to a take-over by the Corporation from the appropriate Ministry, the Abattoir was operated on an experimental basis. It was the use of the new Annexe which, to some extent, has enabled a much larger through-put to be achieved than was the case prior to 1955. The experimental use of the Abattoir for the latter six months of the year has been an opportunity to ascertain its shortcomings, and much has been done on the slaughtering side to overcome the early teething troubles. It would appear that very little consideration was given when the building was designed to the needs of meat inspection and much adjustment has had to be done in collaboration with the Slaughtering Contractor in order to establish the means for a reasonable standard of meat inspection.

In addition to the Public Abattoir in Abattoirs Road, the private slaughterhouse taken over on a lease originally with the Ministry of Food, is still used for the slaughter of a number of small animals, and also for kosher killing. Four other private slaughterhouses have also been licensed, but only three were in use during the year. It was decided by the Council last year to declare a resolution of redundancy in respect of two of the private slaughterhouses as soon as circumstances would permit. The present position is therefore that, apart from the Public Abattoir in Abattoirs Road, three slaughterhouses are being licensed annually, and the two which will become redundant have been licensed for three-monthly periods.

At the Abattoirs, improvements have been made in the lairage accommodation, in the lighting and equipment associated with offal hanging, and meat inspection. Although the Abattoirs are now adequately equipped for dealing with cattle and small animals, there is still a deficiency in respect of large boars and sows which

cannot be adequately dealt with on the smalls side because of the lack of head room. It is necessary, therefore, with these animals, for the killing to be done on one side and operations completed on the other.

Lairage accommodation at the Abattoir, is still restricted and it is the case often at week-ends when killing is heavy, that animals have had to be kept in the yard. This is neither good for the animals, nor in the interests of hygiene in the slaughterhouse. However, consideration is being given to the extension of the Abattoir accommodation.

Casualty Animals. It will be noted that the number of casualty animals inspected during the year is considerably less than last year which included a period of control. These casualties are sent in from time to time by owners of animals which have suffered accident or are sent in for slaughtering because of illness. The recommendations laid down in Memo. 3—Meat, issued by the Ministry of Food, was followed in these cases. In the case of dressed carcasses, it is necessary that the essential organs should accompany the carcass, while in other cases, a Veterinary Surgeon's Certificate or a written declaration by the owner in the case of sheep, is required. These precautions are necessary when it is considered that such animals may not be in a good state of health when they are sent in to the Abattoir. It is sometimes the case that harmful conditions may be present. There was, therefore, need on occasion for consultation with Veterinarians and owners in connection with this matter. In dealing with the question of practical meat inspection, although their help was not restricted entirely to this aspect of our work, mention should be made of the valuable assistance given by the staff of the Veterinary Research Station of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Co-operation has been constantly available and readily given at all time. The position with regard to casualty animals inspected during the year, is as follows :—

Cows	Heifers and Steers	Bulls	Sheep	Calves	Pigs
3	4	1	42	1	43

The damage wrought by roving dogs on flocks of sheep has often featured in the Press but, despite the publicity given to this matter, it appears to be a constant problem. Considerable suffering to sheep must be caused in this way, quite apart from the economic loss of either the whole or part of an animal. Some 39 sheep were brought into the Abattoir during the year due to being savaged by dogs. Of these 15 complete carcasses and 24 part carcasses were condemned because of extensive bruising and other injuries.

Inspection of Dressed Carcasses, The number of dressed carcasses received at the Abattoir and slaughterhouses during the year was slightly more than in previous years. The details of the dressed carcasses which were received from the Veterinary Research Establishment in the adjoining area are as follows :—

134 sides of beef, 93 calves, 73 sheep and 75 pigs.

Meat Inspection. The number of animals slaughtered in Reading during the year was appreciably higher than the figures for 1954. This follows the trend of continued increased through-put since 1951, particularly at the Public Abattoirs. 124,477 were slaughtered during the year. The figures for 1954/1955 have been compiled graphically, and the graph found on page 85 will illustrate quite clearly how slaughtering has increased.

The increased slaughtering and the lack of suitably qualified District Sanitary Inspectors necessitated a review of the meat inspection staff, and the Inspectors engaged on specialised duties of meat inspection were increased from two to three. This was done with the hope that as soon as assistance was forthcoming from District

Sanitary Inspectors and a drop in through-put took place this would enable one of the Meat Inspectors to be given a break from this arduous and exacting work by having a spell on district duties. This arrangement has been operated as far as it has been possible to do so. There has, of course, been a heavy burden on Meat Inspectors both from the point of view of numbers of animals and times of slaughter.

It will be noted from the statistics that there has been a very big increase in the number of cows killed during the year which, in itself, has created more work for the meat inspection staff, since older animals are more likely to show indications of disease. Other non-infectious conditions which might affect the fitness or otherwise of the carcase may also be present. This circumstance makes more necessary the maintenance of an efficient inspection service.

An interesting feature of the work at the Abattoir during the year was the slaughter of a number of contacts of atrophic rhinitis. This is a disease which has been found to affect the Landrace breed of pigs. It is a contagious disease which has been observed in the Scandinavian countries during the last few years. Up to the present, however, its cause is a little uncertain.

Once again, I would like to record appreciation of the co-operation afforded by slaughtering contractor. The line system of slaughtering, more than any, is very difficult to operate unless there is complete co-ordination between the slaughtering and inspection sides of the job.

Calves affected with Congenital Tuberculosis. The number of calves affected with congenital tuberculosis found during the year, was again encouragingly small. Details of calves found to be affected with tuberculosis are forwarded to the Animal Health Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries so that investigation may be made on the source from which the calf was obtained. It is not always possible to trace the animal back to its first home where the calf has changed hands several times since leaving it, but the Ministry are often able to investigate the circumstances on the farm when it may be necessary to deal with the dam or sire under the Tuberculosis Order.

Cysticercus Bovis. The number of cases of cysticercus bovis found at the Abattoirs during the year shows a much lower incidence than last year. Three cases only were found. All affected offal was condemned, and after careful examination of carcase muscles and removal of affected parts, carcasses were refrigerated for the recommended period of twenty-one days so as to ensure that the meat was safe for human consumption before release.

Diseases of Animals Act 1894 to 1950. The Meat Inspectors are authorised officers for the purposes of the Diseases of Animals Acts and are responsible for ensuring the proper disposal of the diseased carcasses and the disinfection of infected premises. During the year 19 cases of swine fever were reported but only 4 were confirmed. One of these was found during the routine inspection of meat at the Abattoirs, the other three instances occurred at piggeries in the Borough. Disinfection of the premises was carried out under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspectors and the infected carcasses were disposed of at the Ministry of Agriculture's premises in Redlands Road, where an incinerator is available. This is another example of how the Ministry are being of assistance to the Local Authority since, if their incinerator were not available, there would be difficulty in satisfactorily disposing of the carcasses, or alternatively an incinerator would have to be provided by the Corporation.

A number of cattle were sent into the Abattoirs for slaughtering under the Tuberculosis (Slaughter of Reactors) Order, 1950, and dealt with by the meat inspectors and the Divisional Veterinary Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Slaughter of Animals Acts, 1933 to 1954. The number of persons requiring licences to slaughter increased again this year, a total of 63 licences have been issued compared with 59 last year and 43 in 1953. Both the captive bolt pistol and the electric lethaler are used in the Abattoirs and other slaughterhouses and a number of animals are killed by Jewish Ritual. No infringement of the Acts were reported.

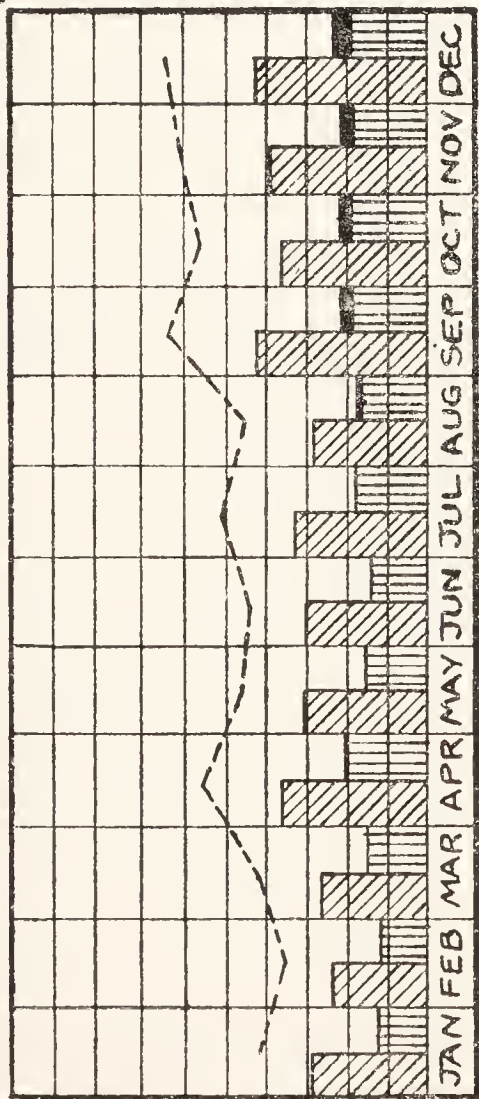
Condemned Meat. Although it was anticipated during the year that regulations would be issued by the appropriate Ministry outlining the methods by which condemned meat and offal should be disposed of, these did not materialise. This is a matter which received quite a lot of attention in August, 1954, when it was felt that the conditions of disposal then in use should be more stringent so as to ensure that condemned meat and offal was, at some stage or other, sterilised before it could be used for animal feeding. Methods of disposal vary in different towns. In Reading the terms of user at the Abattoir require that all condemned meat and offal shall be disposed of in a manner approved by the Medical Officer of Health. During the year, condemned material was disposed of to three sources. A quantity was sent to a Zoo, much of the material was disposed of by way of processing into fertilizers, feeding stuffs, industrial fats, etc. ; a quantity of non-infected was also sent to an animal food establishment.

Some 136 tons of meat were condemned during the year. The following table sets out the number of carcasses inspected, together with particulars of the carcasses, or parts thereof, condemned, and is in the form required by the Ministry.

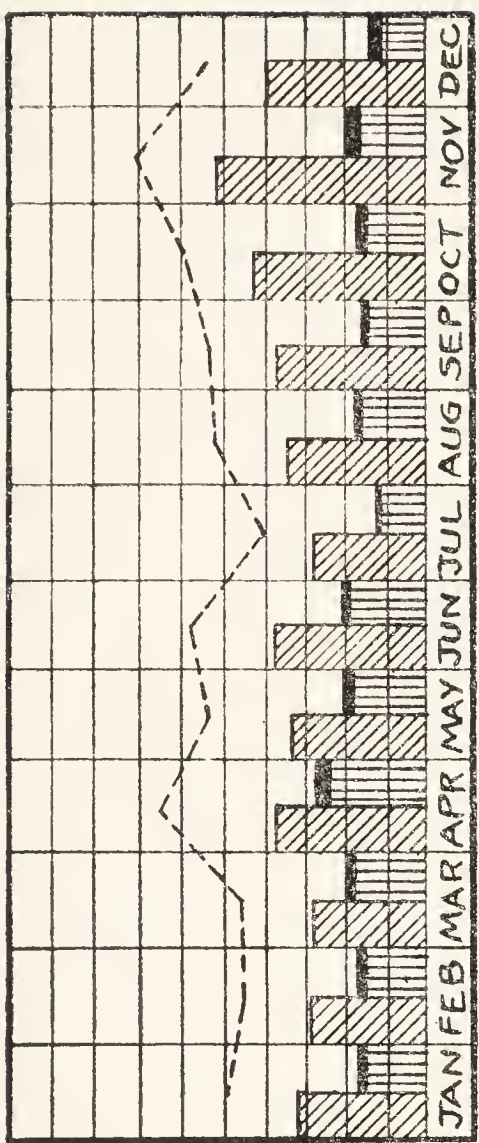
	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	9,300	11,857	16,396	17,425	69,499	Nil
Number inspected	9,300	11,857	16,396	17,425	69,499	Nil
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci. Whole carcasses con- demned	3	104	30	108	273	Nil
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	2,761	5,498	28	509	5,832	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci ...	29.72	47.24	.35	3.54	8.78	Nil
<i>Tuberculosis only :</i>						
Whole carcasses condemned ...	12	139	7	—	9	Nil
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	402	1,727	32	—	493	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ...	4.45	15.74	.24	—	.72	Nil
<i>Cysticercosis :</i>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	3	—	—	—	—	Nil
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	2	—	—	—	—	Nil
Generalised and totally condemned	Nil	—	—	—	—	Nil

MEAT INSPECTION

1954



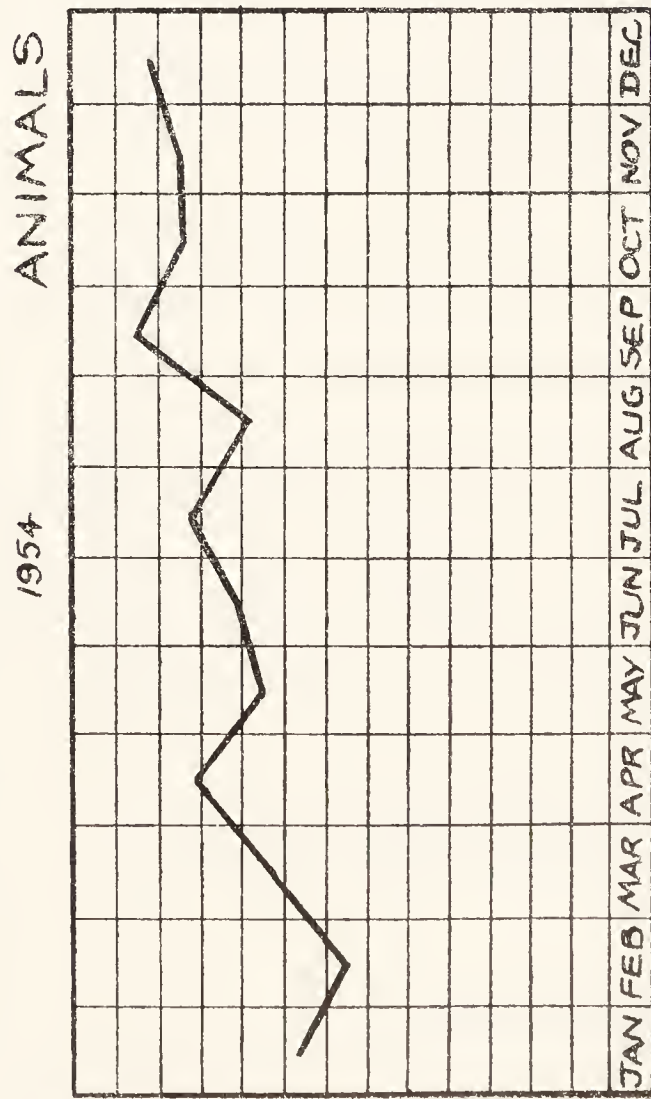
1955



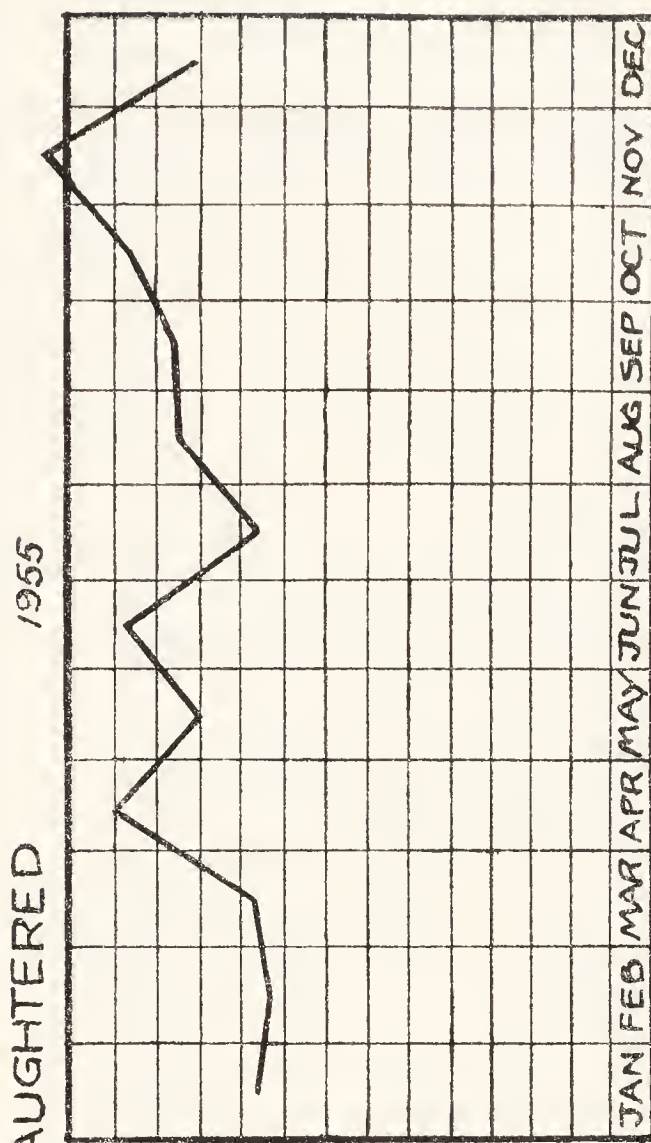
KEY

PUBLIC ABATTOIRS
 BACON FACTORY
 TOTAL

1954



1955



OTHER
 SLAUGHTERHOUSES
 TOTAL

Incidence of Tuberculosis in Cows

1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
36.46	24.61	23.95	18.76	15.74

Diseased Meat and Offals. The following quantities of meat and offals were found during the year to be diseased, unsound or unfit for human consumption :—

Whole Carcasses

Disease	Heifers and Steers	Cows	Bulls	Calves	Pigs	Sheep
Tuberculosis	11	139	1	7	9	—
Abnormal Odour	—	1	—	—	—	—
Asphyxia	—	—	—	—	2	—
Bruising and injuries	—	2	—	—	1	—
Bruising extensive due to dog bites	—	—	—	—	—	15
Dead in pen	—	—	—	—	2	—
Dead on arrival	—	—	—	1	9	—
Emaciation	—	8	—	1	—	9
Enteritis	—	—	—	1	—	—
Erysipelas, Acute Swine	—	—	—	—	13	—
Fevered and Moribund Condition	—	2	—	7	25	—
Gangrene	—	1	1	—	—	—
Immaturity	—	—	—	7	148	—
Jaundice	—	—	—	1	6	—
Johnes Disease	—	3	—	—	—	—
Leukaemia	—	—	—	—	1	—
Oedema	1	28	—	9	—	8
Oedema and Emaciation	—	46	—	—	2	75
Pigmentation	—	1	—	—	—	—
Pyæmia	—	—	—	2	25	—
Pyrexia	—	—	—	—	6	—
Septicaemia	1	5	—	1	19	1
Septic Mastitis	—	1	—	—	—	—
Septic Metritis	—	1	—	—	—	—
Septic Pericarditis	—	1	—	—	—	—
Septic Peritonitis	—	3	—	—	6	—
Septic Pneumonia	—	1	—	—	6	—
Tetanus	—	—	—	—	1	—
Uraemia	—	—	—	—	1	—
	13	243	2	37	282	108

Part Carcasses

Disease	Heifers and Steers	Cows	Bulls	Calves	Pigs	Sheep
Tuberculosis	10	56	—	—	9	—
Abscess	—	1	—	1	23	4
Arthritis	—	1	—	—	6	—
Bruising and injuries	6	24	—	—	41	6
Bruising extensive due to dog bites	—	—	—	—	—	24
Congestion	—	—	—	—	1	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	2	—
Lipoma	—	2	—	—	—	—
Melanosis	—	2	—	—	—	—
Non-Malignant Tumour	—	—	—	—	1	—
Peritonitis	—	—	—	—	2	—
Pleurisy	—	—	—	—	1	—
	16	86	—	1	86	34

Organs etc.

Heads and Tongues

Tuberculosis	...	...	1,376
Abscess	...	...	109
Actinomycosis	...	...	109
Bloodsplash	...	...	1
Cysticercus Bovis	...	...	3
Injuries	...	...	4

Lungs

Tuberculosis	...	...	1,547
Abscess	...	...	175
Congestion	...	...	981
Cysts	...	...	70
Decomposition	...	...	23
Distomatosis	...	...	125
Emphysema	...	...	68
Inflammation	...	...	4
Lipoma	...	...	1
Melanosis	...	...	4
Parasites	...	...	19
Pleurisy	...	...	1,454
Pneumonia	...	...	886
Sarcoma	...	...	1

Livers

Tuberculosis	...	...	560
Abscess	...	...	672
Angioma	...	...	689
Cirrhosis...	...	...	1,591
Coccidiosis	...	...	2
Cysts	...	...	54
Decomposition	...	...	23
Degenerations	...	...	163
Distomatosis	...	...	3,652
Hepatitis	...	...	19
Inflammation	...	...	28
Melanosis	...	...	4
Milkspot...	...	...	676
Necrosis	...	...	127
Parasites	...	...	11
Peritonitis	...	...	123
Sarcoma	...	...	1

Part Livers

Angioma	...	...	16
Distomatosis	...	...	2,801

Stomachs

Tuberculosis	...	...	28
Abscess	...	...	6
Contamination	...	...	1
Dropsy	...	...	1
Inflammation	...	...	67
Peritonitis	...	...	15
Flays Peritonitis	...	...	30
Flays Abscess	...	...	3

Kidney Knobs

Tuberculosis	...	...	4
Abscess	...	...	4
Cysts	...	...	2
Lipoma	...	...	2
Metaplasia	...	...	2
Nephritis	...	...	7

Hearts

Tuberculosis	...	...	152
Abscess	...	...	25
Congestion	...	...	1
Cysticercus Bovis	...	...	2
Decomposition	...	...	23
Erysipelas	...	...	2
Pericarditis	...	...	1,885
Xanthosis	...	...	2

Spleens

Tuberculosis	...	...	34
Abscess	...	...	11
Degenerations	...	...	2
Haemorrhage	...	...	2
Inflammation	...	...	18
Peritonitis	...	...	3
Rupture	...	...	15
Sarcoma	...	...	1
Thrombosis	...	...	3

Kidneys

Tuberculosis	...	...	18
Abscess	...	...	18
Bloodgorged	...	...	5
Bruising	...	...	4
Cysts	...	...	986
Inflammation	...	...	2
Melanosis	...	...	4
Metaplasia	...	...	2
Necrosis	...	...	6
Nephritis	...	...	395
Petechial Haemorrhage	...	...	2
Sarcoma	...	...	1

Skirts

Tuberculosis	...	...	69
Abscess	...	...	1
Bloodsplash	...	...	1
Peritonitis	...	...	125

Udders

Tuberculosis	...	...	5
Induration	...	...	46
Mammitis	...	...	51

Intestines

Tuberculosis	...	...	86
Abscess	...	...	2
Bowel Oedema	...	...	72
Congestion	...	...	4
Contamination	...	...	3
Inflammation	...	...	2
Johnes Disease	...	...	14
Lipoma	...	...	1
Peritonitis	...	...	96
Sarcoma	...	...	2

Transport of Meat. Over the last eighteen months, there has been a gradual change so far as meat transport is concerned and it would appear that more butchers are now transporting their own meat. It was found necessary, in a number of cases,

to draw the attention of vehicle owners to certain matters but there was a degree of general improvement. There is still much to be done, however, before we can say that all is satisfactory. The Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955, which begin to operate next year, should be of considerable help. Particular reference is made to the transport of meat and conditions have been laid down which apply to van construction, the cleanliness of equipment, vehicles, etc., and the use of clean overalls and head covering by meat handlers. Offals are also to be required to be transported in a suitable and separate receptacle apart from other meat. The trade has been circularised with the new requirements and particular attention is to be applied to this work in the coming year.

Knackers' Yard. There is one Knacker's Yard in the Borough which is subject to annual licensing by the Council. It is pleasing to report that these premises were reconstructed during the year and are now of a satisfactory standard. Attention was given to the means of drainage, water supply, meat hanging facilities and the disposal of refuse, apart from the complete new building provided. The register kept in accordance with the Knackers' Yard Orders shows that 163 bovine and 29 equine animals were dealt with on the premises during the year. No complaints were received in respect of this establishment, and it was carried on satisfactorily during the year. The Sanitary Inspectors made 67 visits to the premises during 1955.

(b) UNWHOLESOME FOOD CONDEMNED

Some 665 visits were made to food establishments throughout the year for the purpose of dealing with unwholesome food. Six and threequarter tons of food were condemned, and 2,029 certificates issued to the traders concerned. Brief particulars of the food condemned are given below :—

Biscuits	...	...	...	...	...	11 lbs.
Blancmange Powder	...	...	...	...	...	72 packets
Butter	...	...	...	...	...	6 lbs.
Cakes	...	...	...	...	...	119 lbs.
Canned Goods	...	...	...	...	...	10,192 tins
Cheese	...	...	...	...	...	1,969 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.
Dates	...	...	...	...	...	28 lbs.
Dripping	...	...	...	...	...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Egg Albumen	...	...	...	...	...	44 lbs.
Fish	...	...	...	...	...	441 lbs.
Ginger	...	...	...	...	...	3 lbs.
Ham	...	...	...	...	...	1,149 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Jam	...	...	...	...	...	1 lb.
Marzipan	...	...	...	...	...	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Meat and Bacon	...	...	...	...	...	2,475 lbs.
Meat Pies	...	...	...	...	...	152 lbs.
Peas	...	...	...	...	...	352 lbs.
Prunes	...	...	...	...	...	33 lbs.
Raisins	...	...	...	...	...	38 lbs.
Rice	...	...	...	...	...	100 lbs.
Sausages	...	...	...	...	...	429 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Tomatoes	...	...	...	...	...	396 lbs.

(c) MILK

Dairy Establishments in the town were inspected regularly during the year and conditions have been found reasonably satisfactory. The numbers of licences issued during the year under the Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Steril-

ised Milk) Regulations, 1949 and the Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949 were as follows :—

Plant Licences for milk pasteurisation 3

Dealer's Licences for sale of :—

Pasteurised Milk	...	...	...	...	67
Sterilised Milk	...	...	...	...	86
Tuberculin Tested Milk	...	...	...	...	28

A number of firms distributing milk in the town were from districts outside. Supplementary Licences issued to these Distributors were as follows :—

For the sale of :—

Pasteurised Milk	...	...	...	...	4
Sterilised Milk	...	...	...	...	2
Tuberculin Tested Milk	...	...	...	...	8

It will be noted that there are now only three milk processing plants licensed in the town. Two of the smaller dairies went out of business having been taken over by one of the larger combines. It will be remembered that two plants were discontinued last year also, so that the trend for the small man to disappear was continued so far as milk processing is concerned. With the reduction in the number of processing plants and the increasing population there is a greater through-put through the plants remaining, with a corresponding increase in the number of persons at risk with regard to individual plants. A close supervision of processing plants, therefore, becomes more important.

It is interesting to note that there is a slight increase in the number of distributors selling heat treated milk, whilst the number selling raw designated milk has slightly gone down.

As a result of expanding business, one of the firms in the town has found it necessary to carry out improvements to the premises so as to streamline the operations associated with the plant. This work was in progress at the end of the year.

Samples : Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) and (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949. The results of samples submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for examination under the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations are shown below :—

Class of Milk	No. of Samples Tested	Appropriate Tests	No. of Samples		
			Passed	Failed	Void
Pasteurised ...	365	Phosphatase	358	5	2
		Methylene Blue	272	—	93
Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised)	184	Phosphatase	182	1	1
		Methylene Blue	134	—	50
Tuberculin Tested	40	Methylene Blue	35	5	—
Sterilised	21	Turbidity	21	—	—

Some 610 samples of various types of designated milks were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for subjection to the prescribed tests. 146 of these samples were declared void. 446 samples of milk were examined by the Methylene Blue test

which is designed to indicate keeping quality and, to some extent, the conditions under which the milk was produced. It is pleasant to report that all the heat treated milks satisfied this test; five tuberculin tested milk samples, however, were unsatisfactory. The circumstances at the local dairies were investigated and the facts reported to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries who are responsible for the conditions under which milk is produced at the farm. Five samples were reported as having failed the Phosphatase test, two being from plants situated outside the Borough. Where the plants concerned were situated in the town, the circumstances of processing were investigated, and whilst no apparent reason could be found for the failures, samples taken subsequently proved satisfactory. In the two other cases the appropriate licensing authorities were informed. In these cases, also, subsequent samples taken from the firm were in order.

The 21 sterilised milks were submitted to Turbidity test, and all proved satisfactory.

The results shown this year can be considered as fairly satisfactory although it seems very necessary once again to draw attention to the number of samples declared void so far as the Methylene Blue test is concerned. It will be noted that the number of samples declared void was 146 compared with 54 last year and 13 in 1953. The 1955 figure no doubt reflects the consistently fine summer we had during the year. The regulations provide that, on arrival at the Laboratory, samples of pasteurised milk shall be removed from the insulated container and kept at atmospheric temperature until the Methylene Blue test is completed, and if at any time the atmospheric shade temperature in the immediate vicinity of the samples exceeds 65° Fahrenheit, the test shall be declared void. It does, however, in some respects, seem unsatisfactory when, on the occasions that temperatures are high, it is possible that no keeping quality test can be applied.

Biological Tests. The Laboratory facilities for the biological examination of milk were again very restricted during the year. Eight samples were submitted for examination. All were reported negative. This test is applied for the purpose of seeing whether live tubercle bacilli are present in the milk and is carried out by means of guinea pig injections. As far as Reading is concerned, the tests are useful although they have a limited value since all the milk consumed in the town is either tuberculin tested or is subject to heat treatment. It could, nevertheless, be a second line of defence against tuberculosis in milk since there are occasions, as will be noted in the report, when milk may not be adequately heat treated.

Milk Bottles. A few complaints were received during the year concerning milk bottles found in an unsatisfactory condition. It is known that this is a matter for concern with the large dairies because of the large number of bottles which are misused by consumers and returned to the dairy in a dirty condition. Although the dairies have a responsibility with regard to this matter, it is very necessary that there should be a sense of responsibility also amongst consumers and the public at large. The simple act of rinsing a bottle immediately it is empty would do a considerable service to all concerned with milk supplies and should be accepted now merely as good household hygienic practice. It was necessary, however, to institute proceedings against one of the Reading dairy firms in respect of dirty milk bottles. The firm pleaded guilty and a fine of £10 was imposed.

School Milk Supply. The milk supplied to all Council schools is pasteurised and samples have been taken regularly, and submitted for examination. All school milks were reported satisfactory.

Ice Cream. The number of dealers registered in connection with the handling and sale of ice cream shows an increase on last year, there being 469 on the register on 31st December. There are 7 ice cream manufacturers on the register as compared

with 8 last year. Regular and frequent inspections were made throughout the year of ice cream establishments. Most of the ice cream in the town is sold pre-wrapped or in containers, and the hygienic standard attained was generally satisfactory. The regulations which were applied to ice cream in 1947, have undoubtedly brought about a great improvement in the hygienic standard of this product. Some 131 samples of ice cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for examination by the Methylene Blue test, the results being as follows :—

Provisional Grade 1	...	...	...	...	113	(86)
Provisional Grade 2	...	...	...	...	15	(12)
Provisional Grade 3	...	...	...	...	2	(5)
Provisional Grade 4	...	...	...	...	1	(11)

It will be noted that the results shown this year are very much better than those for 1954. The samples which were reported as being in Grade 3 or Grade 4 were investigated, both being of local manufacture. In one case relating to a sample of ice cream produced by the cold mix method of manufacture, it was found that the cold mix powder used did not comply with the regulations, and that the method of processing also did not comply. Legal proceedings were taken in this case, the defendant pleading guilty and being fined £5.

Chemical Standards. The food standard relating to ice cream as laid down in The Food Standards (Ice Cream) Order 1951 is briefly as follows :—

“ Ice cream shall contain not less than 5% fat, 10% sugar and 7½% milk solids-non-fat. Certain adjustments are made in the standard for ice cream containing fruit, fruit pulp, etc., and also “ Parev ” (Kosher) ice cream.”

11 samples of ice cream were procured during the year and submitted to the Public Analyst for analysis. One sample was reported unsatisfactory and legal proceedings were taken against the producer. A fine of £5 was imposed. This sample had been obtained from the same source as the two samples in respect of which warnings were issued last year, the producer also being the one proceeded against for unsatisfactory methods of manufacture.

The Methylene Blue Test. The methylene Blue Test which has been operating for the last few years, is still only being applied experimentally. The provisional gradings are as follows :—

<i>Provisional Grading</i>	<i>Time taken to reduce Methylene Blue</i>			
1				4 hours or more
2	2½–4 hours
3	½–2 hours
4	0 hours (i.e. reduction end of incubation period)

Grades 1 and 2 are considered satisfactory, and Grades 3 and 4 unsatisfactory.

The standard suggested for manufacturers is that over a period of six months, 50% of the samples should fall in Grade 1, 80% in Grade 1 or 2, not more than 20% in Grade 3 and none in Grade 4.

The test has no legal significance, but it forms a very useful guide as to the conditions under which ice cream is produced. The circumstances and conditions of production of the samples falling within the provisional grades 3 and 4, were investigated and advice was given.

Ice Cream Vehicles, Stalls, etc. Ice cream vehicles operating in the town were periodically inspected. Almost without exception wrapped ice cream only

is served. The vehicles were found to be generally satisfactory from the point of view of cleanliness and were of a good standard. Stalls erected in the parks and playing fields were also regularly inspected during the season of use.

FOOD HANDLING, ETC.

As far as possible attention was given during the year to all premises where food is manufactured or handled, special attention being given to restaurants and cafés and other premises of a similar nature. Despite the very high cost of building works, there was a number of fairly extensive improvements at some of the larger food premises—restaurants, bakehouses, an imported meat depot, a prepared meat factory, while many lesser improvements were carried out in grocers and butchers shops and other food establishments. Emphasis has been laid during the year on the need for improved premises both as regards structure and amenities. Separate washing facilities for the exclusive use of the persons employed, with adequate supplies of hot and cold water, soap, towels, etc., are points which have been particularly stressed and inspectors have given advice and guidance in many ways. The practice of pre-wrapping foodstuffs is increasing, and the number of articles of food which are dispensed unwrapped on the premises is becoming increasingly small. Cooked meat, bacon and ham, cheese, some biscuits, meat and small meat products are now the only main items not pre-wrapped. It has been noted that a start has been made on the sale of pre-wrapped joints of meat, sliced bacon also is pre-wrapped, though quantities are as yet quite small. The needs of the export trade have been partly responsible for the more extensive pre-packing of goods and a greater degree of mechanisation, besides the greatly improved standard of hygienic practice in the premises themselves.

In the case of routine visits the food premises traders have been constantly reminded of the requirements of the byelaws relating to the handling, wrapping and delivery of food. Although no legal proceedings were instituted under the byelaws it was found necessary to take informal action in a number of cases.

Extraneous Matter in Food. Several complaints were received during the year concerning extraneous matter in food. Investigations were made into the circumstances of these cases and appropriate action was taken.

Food Premises. There are 98 premises registered in accordance with the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, as follows :—

Fish Friers	...	...	...	...	...	...	44
Sausage Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
Pressed Meat Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	...	33
Jam Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Pickles Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Potato Crisps Manufacturers	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Margarine Wholesale Stores	...	...	...	...	...	...	4

In addition to the above, there are 1,014 other food premises recorded.

2,586 inspections were made to food premises. 23 informal notices were served requiring improvements. In the main, traders showed ready co-operation. A summary of the visits is as follows :—

Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	124
Bakers and Confectioners	...	...	...	...	...	...	74
Butchers' Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	322
Dairies and Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	380
Fish Shops and Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	102
Food Factories	...	...	...	...	...	...	80

Greengrocers and Fruiterers	...	...	...	...	135
Grocers	...	...	...	...	724
Markets and Stalls	...	...	...	...	50
Restaurants and Kitchens	...	...	...	...	331
School Meals Kitchens	...	...	...	...	93
Sweet Shops	...	...	...	...	48
Works Canteens	...	...	...	...	14
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	109

School Kitchens. There was constant liaison with the School Meals Organiser on many matters of food hygiene and the quality of food being supplied to the School Meals Service. Improvements continue to be made in the kitchens, redecoration being carried out where necessary, ventilation facilities have been improved in a number of cases and attention has been given to personal ablution facilities. As far as possible food stores attached to the kitchens were inspected monthly and meat, milk and other food supplies to the kitchens regularly checked.

Licensed Premises. 30 visits were paid to licensed premises during the year.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955

At the end of the year the new Food and Drugs Act which has been anticipated for so long received the Royal Assent and came into force on 1st January, 1956. In addition to consolidating the earlier Food and Drugs Acts, it extends the law relating to Food and Drugs and makes many detailed amendments and alterations to the earlier law. The principal extensions, however, will be affected by means of Regulations which the Minister has power to make in respect of many matters. Food Hygiene Regulations have been made under the new Act and whilst most of the provisions became operative on the 1st January, 1956, certain requirements which may involve alterations to premises or equipment or substantial changes in existing practices are deferred until the 1st July. It is understood that the Minister is considering making Regulations relating to the handling of food at docks, wharfs, public warehouses and cold stores, carriers and wholesale vegetable merchants premises, storehouses and slaughterhouses.

The Food Hygiene Regulations are designed to bring about improvements in food premises in various ways—by requiring higher standard with regard to personal ablution facilities for the staff in the food establishments—the provision of separate sinks for washing food and equipment and of suitable accommodation for clothing and footwear not worn by the persons employed during working hours. First aid equipment is to be required in food establishments. The Regulations also lay down additional requirements with regard to the transportation and carrying of meat. Special provisions apply to stalls.

Particular attention has been given to the temperatures at which the so-called “ dangerous ” foods are to be kept when not exposed for sale and are intended for immediate consumption. Temperature is one of the important factors in connection with unsatisfactory storage conditions of food, and probably the one which is most easily controlled. This will be an extremely useful provision and if properly complied with should do much to reduce the incidence of food poisoning throughout the country.

The introduction of the new legislation will necessitate the review of all the food premises in the town and will involve an inspection of many new establishments. The definition of “ food business ” under the new regulations is very wide in its application and will include most local authority establishments and many public institutions.

Education. In the circular which accompanied the new Food Hygiene Regulations it was stated that food hygiene is recognised by the food and catering industries as sound commercial practice, serving business interests as well as public health, and that in the application of these new requirements local authorities will have the support of the food and catering industries. It is emphasised, however, that statutory regulations in themselves can never achieve the improvement everyone hopes to see, and that the application of regulations will need to be continually supplemented with publicity and education in order that food handlers and the public may always have before them the importance of good food hygiene practice.

Stress has been made of this very point in previous annual reports, but in the past and as is the case again this year, it has not been possible because of staff difficulties to carry out to any extent this very necessary work. However, it was found possible to make a start on collective food hygiene education when two talks supplemented by films were given to food handling personnel at one of the large bakeries in the town. They were very well received by the staff and the management later commented on the improved hygiene consciousness shown by the staff. More of this work will be done in the coming year, circumstances permitting, with the ultimate view of establishing a recognised short course of instruction for food handlers. As to whether or not it will be possible to organise such a course will depend to a very large extent upon the support forthcoming from the food traders.

Several organisations were addressed on food handling during the year and it would appear from the attention given that there is some degree of public concern in this matter. It is felt, however, that the public do not fully appreciate the weight of the support they are capable of giving to a campaign of higher standards of food handling. It is far better to complain to the person in charge of any premises where unsatisfactory conditions exist or to this department than to let incidents pass without comment. The customer is nearly always right today but it should be remembered that it is sometimes the case that he will receive the standard of service he demands.

(f) *FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS, 1938-1950*

Sampling. Mr. T. McLachlan, A.C.G.F.C., F.R.I.C. and Mr. F. A. Lyne, B.Sc., F.R.I.C., of Messrs. Thomas McLachlan & Partners, held the appointment of Public Analyst and Deputy Public Analyst respectively during the year

One of the important responsibilities of the Local Authority is to enforce those Sections of the Food and Drugs Acts which relate to the nature, substance and quality of food, and the proper labelling and advertising of food. A total of 507 samples of food and drugs were submitted for examination during the year compared with 421 last year. In 1955, 42 (8.28%) were reported to be not up to standard compared with 55 (13.07%) in 1954. Details of the samples procured are shown in the table on page 95.

Of the samples obtained, 141 were of milk, of these 14 (10%) were not up to standard and were classified as "genuine milks poor quality." This figure compares with 41 (21%) out of a total of 199 samples of milk obtained last year.

The total number of producers sampled was 73, and 8 of these were responsible for the production of milk of low quality; 3 of these producers were also concerned with the production of milk of low quality last year.

There is, of course, no legal remedy for genuine milk of low quality since no precise standard is laid down for this commodity. At the present time, where milk does not comply with the standard 3% fat and 8.5% solids non-fat as specified in the Sale of Milk Regulations, there is a presumption, until the contrary is proved, that the milk is adulterated. However, if it is shown that the poor quality milk is as received from the cow, no legal proceedings can be taken. Largely because there

is no set standard for the compositional quality of milk, many producers pursue the policy of producing for quantity rather than for quality. It is felt that this policy will continue until either there is lower pecuniary reward for this milk of low quality, or regulations are introduced requiring the observance of some fixed minimum standard. It is understood that the matter is being considered by the appropriate Ministries. It is hoped that a solution to this problem will be found.

In dealing with food standards, mention should be made of the need for a legal standard so far as the meat content in sausages is concerned. There have been varying results in cases heard in different parts of the country, all of which were decided upon a local interpretation of what is a reasonable standard for the meat content in sausages. Views have varied in different districts and there is apprehension amongst food and drugs authorities and traders. It is necessary for all concerned that some form of legal standard should be laid down.

In only one case was it found necessary to institute proceedings in respect of a sample during the year. The case concerned ice cream which was found not to comply with the appropriate Food Standards (Ice Cream) Order, 1953.

Action taken in respect of the samples reported as adulterated or below standard are shown in the table below.

FOOD AND DRUGS SAMPLES

Article examined				Number of Samples	Number found to be genuine	Number not up to standard
Almond Flavour	...	...	...	1	1	—
Almonds, Ground	...	...	...	3	3	—
Angelica	...	...	...	1	1	—
Apricots, Tinned	...	...	...	1	1	—
Arrowroot	...	...	...	1	1	—
Aspirin Tablet	...	...	...	4	4	—
Baking Powder	...	...	...	3	3	—
Baby Cough Mixture	...	...	...	2	—	2
Beans, Canned	...	...	...	3	3	—
Beechams Powder	...	...	...	1	1	—
Beetroot	...	...	...	1	1	—
Bicarbonate of Soda	...	...	...	2	2	—
Biscuits	...	...	...	3	3	—
Bismuth Lozenges	...	...	...	1	—	1
Bismuth Tablets	...	...	...	2	1	1
Bisurated Magnesia	...	...	...	1	—	1
Black Pudding	...	...	...	1	1	—
Blancmange Powder	...	...	...	3	3	—
Boracic Powder	...	...	...	1	1	—
Boric Acid Powder	...	...	...	1	1	—
Bread and Butter	...	...	...	3	3	—
Butter	...	...	...	5	5	—
Cake	...	...	...	3	3	—
Cake and Pudding Mixture	...	...	...	10	10	—
Camphorated Oil	...	...	...	1	1	—
Carraway Seeds	...	...	...	1	1	—
Carrots	...	...	...	1	1	—
Cascara	...	...	...	1	1	—
Castor Oil	...	...	...	2	2	—
Cheese, Cheddar	...	...	...	1	1	—
Cheese Spread	...	...	...	8	8	—
Cherries, Canned	...	...	...	1	1	—
Chicken and Ham Pie	...	...	...	1	1	—
Chicken Rissoles	...	...	...	1	1	—
Chocolate Spread	...	...	...	1	1	—
Christmas Pudding	...	...	...	1	1	—
Citric Acid	...	...	...	1	1	—

Article examined	Number of Samples	Number found to be genuine	Number not up to standard
Cocktail Cherries	1	1	—
Coconut, Dessicated	3	3	—
Codeine and Creosote Pastilles	1	—	1
Cod Liver Oil Compound	2	1	1
Coffee	1	1	—
Coffee and Chicory	6	6	—
Coffee Spread	1	1	—
Concentrated Orange Juices	1	1	—
Cornflour	2	2	—
Cough Linctus	2	1	1
Cough Mixture	2	2	—
Cough Pastilles	1	—	1
Cream	4	4	—
Cream of Tartar	3	3	—
Currants	2	1	1
Curry Powder	1	1	—
Custard Powder	3	3	—
Cut Mixed Peel	6	6	—
Double Cream	1	1	—
Dried Skimmed Milk	1	—	1
Dripping	1	1	—
Egg Albumen	1	1	—
Embrocation	3	—	3
Epsom Salts	2	2	—
Fish Cakes	2	2	—
Fish, Canned	2	2	—
Fish Paste	3	3	—
Flour	4	4	—
Friars Balsam	1	1	—
Fruit, Canned	4	4	—
Garden Mint	1	1	—
Gelatine	2	2	—
Glace Cherries	1	1	—
Glauber Salts	1	1	—
Glucose	3	2	1
Glycerine B.P.	1	1	—
Glycerine, Lemon and Honey	1	—	1
Gravy Powder	1	1	—
Herbs, Dried	3	3	—
Honey	1	1	—
Horseradish Sauce	1	1	—
Ice Cream	11	10	1
Iodised Throat Lozenges	1	1	—
Jam	8	8	—
Jelly	2	2	—
Jelly Powder	1	1	—
Lard	5	5	—
Lemon Curd	5	5	—
Lemon Flavoured Syrup	1	—	1
Lemon Juice	1	1	—
Lemon Pie Filling	1	1	—
Lemonade Powder	3	3	—
Lentils	1	1	—
Linseed, Liquorice and Chlorodyne Lozenges	1	1	—
Liquid Paraffin... ..	1	1	—
Margarine	3	3	—
Marmalade	1	1	—
Matzo Meal	1	1	—
Meat Paste	4	4	—
Meat Pie	2	2	—
Menthol and Wintergreen Cream	1	—	1
Milk	141	127	14
Milk, Condensed	3	3	—
Milk of Magnesia Tablets	1	1	—
Mincemeat	4	4	—
Mustard	1	1	—

Article examined	Number of Samples	Number found to be genuine	Number not up to standard
Non-Brewed Condiment	1	1	—
Oil of Eucalyptus	1	1	—
Ointment of Boric Acid... ..	1	1	—
Olive Oil	2	2	—
Pearl Barley	2	2	—
Peas, Tinned	6	6	—
Pepper	4	4	—
Pickles	3	3	—
Pie Filling	1	1	—
Pilchards in Tomato Sauce	1	1	—
Pineapple in Syrup	1	—	1
Pork Pie	1	1	—
Raisins	1	1	—
Rennet, Essence of	2	1	1
Rice	3	3	—
Saccharine Tablets	3	3	—
Sago	1	1	—
Sardines in Oil	1	1	—
Sauces	2	2	—
Sausages and Sausage Meat, Beef	4	3	1
Sausages, Lunch	1	1	—
Sausages, Pork	8	5	3
Semolina	3	3	—
Soft Drinks, Cordials and Squashes :—			
Orange	5	5	—
Lemon	1	1	—
Soft Drink Powder	2	2	—
Soup	5	5	—
Soup Powder	3	3	—
Spice	1	1	—
Spirits :—			
Gin	1	1	—
Rum	1	1	—
Whisky	1	1	—
Steak and Kidney Pie	2	2	—
Steak and Kidney Pudding	2	2	—
Stewed Steak	2	2	—
Suet Beef	3	3	—
Sultanas	1	1	—
Sweet and Sugar Confectionery	15	15	—
Tapioca Pearl	4	4	—
Tapioca Flakes	1	1	—
Tea	7	7	—
Tincture of Iodine	4	3	1
Tomatoes, Canned	3	3	—
Tomato Juice	1	1	—
Tomato Soup	1	1	—
Tonic Wine	1	1	—
Treacle	1	1	—
Vegetables, Canned	2	2	—
Vinegar	6	6	—
Vitamin Tablets	2	—	2
Wines :—			
Egg Flip	1	1	—
Port	1	1	—
Raisin (Non-Alcholic)	1	1	—
Ruby	2	2	—
Sherry	2	2	—
Wine Cocktail	1	1	—
Yeast and Sulphur Tablets	1	1	—
Zinc Ointment	1	1	—
Zinc and Castor Oil Ointment	1	1	—
Totals	507	465	42

**ACTION TAKEN IN RESPECT OF THE SAMPLES REPORTED
AS ADULTERATED OR BELOW STANDARD**

No. of Sample	Article	Whether Formal or Informal	Nature of Adulteration	Observations
4	Milk	Formal	0.6% deficient in solids-not-fat	} Inferior quality but genuine milk
5	Milk	Formal	0.9% deficient in solids-not-fat	
8	Milk	Formal	1.6% deficient in solids-not-fat	
9	Milk	Formal	3.5% deficient in solids-not-fat	
15	Pork Sausages	Formal	Meat content 58%	Inferior quality
77	Currants	Formal	Contained beetle larvae	Inferior quality
100	Embrocation	Informal	50% deficient in dried egg	} Stock withdrawn
196	Embrocation	Formal	49% deficient in dried egg	
110	Lemon flavoured Syrup	Informal	Incorrectly labelled	Stock withdrawn. Label amended
160	Cough Linctus	Informal	Deficient in oxymel of squill. Excess sugar	Stock withdrawn
161	Cough Pastilles	Informal	Incorrectly labelled	Label suitably amended
162	Glycerine, Lemon and Honey	Informal	Incorrectly labelled	Label suitably amended
163	Tincture of Iodine	Informal	16.7% deficient in Iodine. 8.6% deficient in pot Iodine	Stock withdrawn
164	Codeine and Creosote Pastilles	Informal	Incorrectly labelled	Label suitably amended
167	Glucose Tablets	Informal	Incorrectly labelled	Label suitably amended
195	Dried Skinmed Milk	Informal	Dirty	Matter taken up with Ministry of Food
200	Menthol and Wintergreen Cream	Informal	Incorrectly labelled	Label suitably amended
204	Bisurated Magnesia	Informal	Incorrectly labelled	Label to be more clearly printed
231	Milk	Formal	Solids-not-fat 8.35%	} Inferior quality but genuine milk
236	Milk	Formal	Fat 2.80%	
238	Milk	Informal	Fat 2.50%	
242	Pork Sausages	Formal	Meat content 63%	} Inferior quality. Letters to firms concerned
247	Pork Chipolatas	Formal	Meat content 60%	
246	Ice Cream	Formal	Deficient in fat	Legal proceedings instituted. Producer fined £5
252	Essence of Rennet	Informal	Fermented	} Old stock. Remainder of old stock withdrawn
253	Pineapple in Syrup	Informal	Fermented	
283	Milk	Informal	8.35% solids-not-fat	} Inferior quality but genuine milk
284	Milk	Informal	8.30% solids-not-fat	
289	Milk	Formal	8.00% solids-not-fat	
290	Milk	Formal	8.25% solids-not-fat	
291	Milk	Formal	8.35% solids-not-fat	
292	Milk	Formal	8.30% solids-not-fat	
327	Milk	Informal	7.90% solids-not-fat	
312	Bismuth Tablets	Informal	Contained no chloroform or ether. Incorrectly described	Matter taken up with Manufacturers
320	Vitamin Tablets	Informal	12.5% deficient in Vitamin A	} Matter taken up with Ministry and Manufacturers
396	Vitamin Tablets	Informal	10.0% deficient in Vitamin A	
373	Bismuth Tablets	Formal	Incorrectly described	Matter taken up with Manufacturers

No. of Sample	Article	Whether Formal or Informal	Nature of Adulteration	Observations
395	Cod Liver Oil Compound	Informal	17.7% deficient in Vitamin A	Matter taken up with Ministry and Manufacturers
412	Beef Sausage Meat	Formal	Contained 244 ppm SO ₂	Preservative not declared. Manufacturer cautioned
475	Embrocation	Informal	Deficient in Oil of Turpentine	Matter taken up with Manufacturers
472	Baby Cough Mixture	Informal	Incorrectly labelled	} Manufacturers warned
490	Baby Cough Mixture	Formal	Did not comply with B.P.C.	

Labelling of Food, etc. Where samples were procured under the Food and Drugs Act, labels were carefully perused to see if they complied with the appropriate Labelling of Food Orders and other legislation. In 4 instances it was found necessary to draw the attention of manufacturers to infringements of various Acts and Orders ; in all cases it was found possible to put matters right informally. Foods manufactured locally were also supervised from the point of food standards.

Merchandise Marks. Special attention was given to the enforcement of the Merchandise Marks Act during the year. The various trades involved were circularised and many inspections made, both at the market and in food premises. It was necessary to write to a number of firms on the matter and in one case a report was made to the appropriate committee. A warning was sent by the Town Clerk in this case. There was a marked improvement in the observance of this Act in the second half of the year.

3. NUISANCES AND WORK UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT

Seven hundred and forty-nine complaints were received by the Section from residents in the Borough concerning many matters. 721 informal notices were served during the year for abatement of nuisances which were not concerned with housing defects, the latter notices being referred to under the section on Housing. Some 709 of the notices served were complied with. Considerable attention had to be given to obstructed and defective sewers and drains, 245 complaints being received during the year. The Authority cleared 107 drains or sewers. Repairs also were carried out in a number of cases. In 41 cases the owners themselves carried out the necessary work. 1,668 visits were paid by Sanitary Inspectors in connection with complaints concerning drainage. With regard to drains and sewers, it is often the case that complaints are received at weekends—Saturdays and Sundays. All these complaints are investigated and, as far as possible, the necessary work is carried out forthwith by Corporation staff. In this regard, mention should be made of the excellent co-operation given by the staff of the Borough Surveyor's Department who have so willingly dealt with these cases whenever a request has been made by this Department.

Disinfestation and Disinfection—Insanitary Premises. Work in connection with the treatment of verminous persons and premises continued throughout the year. In all the cases, some 26 in number, it was possible to do the necessary work on an informal basis. The treatment of verminous persons is not always easy, indeed it is not always easy to confirm that they are, in fact, verminous and there are occasions when much persuasion is necessary before the people concerned are in

a frame of mind to receive treatment. There were several cases in which residents of common lodging houses were involved. A number of old people from elsewhere, too, were in need of cleansing and disinfestation. In addition to Reading residents, a number of persons from the Berks County area were also treated. Collaboration with the Domestic Help Service continued throughout the year in connection with instances of old people living in unsatisfactory conditions. These cases are often most difficult and sometimes require the greatest tact, patience and perseverance. In two instances it was found necessary to take formal action and to do cleansing and disinfestation in default. The Home Help Service have given invaluable help with these problems by clearing up the premises and so make them suitable for the occupants.

Appropriate action was taken in 57 instances of infestation by various types of insects—cockroaches, flies, steam flies, ants, etc. The details of premises treated for bugs or fleas are as follows :—

No. of Complaints Received		No. of Houses Disinfested	No. of Rooms Disinfested
Council Houses	44	41	126
Private Houses	102	95	167

The spate of flea infestation which occurred last year, has abated somewhat, there being only 25 premises requiring attention to deal with this pest.

It is the practice for a member of this Department to inspect those houses from which people are being rehoused in Council houses by the Corporation. The purpose of this is to ensure, as far as possible, that infestation from vermin or wood boring beetles are not transferred from the old property to the new Council house. 365 inspections were made, in no case was it found necessary to carry out disinfestation treatment.

Atmospheric Pollution. There were a number of complaints during the year with regard to excessive emissions of smoke and grit from fuel burning plant in the town. These have involved numerous observations and visits to factories and, in some cases, report to the Health (General Services) Sub-Committee. Laundries were concerned with two of the complaints, in both cases advice has been given to the firms by the National Industrial Fuel Efficiency Service. In one case a comprehensive boiler test was carried out; a report submitted to the firm concerned is receiving consideration. While this latter investigation has been going on it has been possible after consultation with the Fuel Advisory Emergency Committee of the Ministry of Fuel and Power, to make an adjustment in the fuel supply so as to make it less smoke producing. In the other case the nuisance was abated.

In May, numerous reports were received from the Lynmouth Road area concerning heavy discharges of grit from the stacks of the British Electricity Authority establishment there. Observations, assisted by the use of grit plates, confirmed the nuisance. Investigation showed that the trouble was caused by the use during the railway strike, of reserve stocks of fuel which were of very poor quality, high in ash content. Reinstatement of normal supplies put the matter right. There was trouble also during the year from an incinerator in the Craven Road area, but its use was discontinued, another disposal point being found for the material formerly burnt there.

Complaints were received during the year from the Tilehurst area about smoke and noise from railway engines used along that sector on shunting. Noise, of course, is outside the scope of the Public Health Act, but it is a matter which is becoming an increasingly important environmental factor as towns become more urbanised and

the pace of life quickens. Some towns have sought special powers to deal with noise as a public health nuisance. This is a provision which could quite well be extended to all Authorities. With regard to smoke from railways, the answer is electrification, or the use of diesels—a declared policy of British Railways. Until such time as these improvements can be achieved, everything should be done by firemen and others to keep smoke to a minimum. With the normal railway engine, it is only practicable to deal with emissions of black smoke, it not being possible to deal with grey smoke which sometimes arises and is usually the cause of complaint.

Other complaints dealt with during the year underline the importance of ensuring that all new industrial establishments having a nuisance potential, should be allowed to develop in proximity to dwellings only if adequate safeguards can be provided against possible nuisance.

By the end of the year, the Clean Air Bill had been presented to Parliament, and it had its second reading at the time of the drafting of this report. The Bill provides for a more comprehensive approach to the problem of atmospheric pollution, and some of the powers which are enjoyed by some towns obtained by local Parliamentary Bills, are to be made part of general legislation. Smoke control areas and prior approval of fuel burning appliances, in addition to a more positive approach to actual smoke emission, should contribute to an improvement in the atmosphere of the town.

Infectious Diseases. 158 inspections of premises following notification of infectious diseases were made during the year. The houses were inspected and anything of a defective nature put right. Advice was also given by the inspectors in cases where home nursing was carried out.

Common Lodging Houses. The three common lodging houses in the town provide accommodation for 126 persons. The establishments were inspected regularly during the year, some 177 visits being made. Although some repairs have been done to these properties during the year, the position with regard to the provision of essential amenities like hot water and bathing facilities, is not satisfactory, but the respective keepers have maintained a reasonable standard of cleanliness. In all three cases, the properties are old and worn and it is clear that they cannot be relied upon to carry out their present function much longer. Consideration has been given by the Council to the provision of more suitable accommodation for housing the occupants ; it is hoped that it will be possible to carry out the proposed building works without undue delay.

The lodging house in London Street was recently acquired by the Corporation. A number of improvements have been carried out to the means of escape in case of fire, and there has been a certain amount of decoration and repair. Consideration is being given to a more thorough overhaul of the structure during the next financial year.

Offensive Trades. The offensive trades established within the Borough comprise 1 blood drier, 2 tripe boilers and dressers, and 1 rag and bone dealer. A long-established tripe dresser went out of business during the year. The premises in use were regularly inspected and found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

Movable Dwellings. There was a total of 136 licensed caravans on the register at the end of the year. 1,103 visits were paid to caravans and caravan sites and to movable dwellings visiting the area with travelling fairs and shows. No nuisances have been observed and no cases of infectious diseases were notified.

The position with regard to the licensing of movable dwellings and caravan sites was fully investigated during the year and a detailed report submitted to the Health (General Services) Sub-Committee. Two site licences were approved, one

in the Tilehurst area which was extended to accommodate 53 caravans, and the other which is licensed for 14 caravans in the Scours Lane area.

A number of the caravans licensed have been stationed on building sites, and they have been used as housing accommodation until such time as the building has been completed. Many are used as semi-permanent housing accommodation although they cannot, in normal circumstances, be considered as an adequate substitute for a proper house. It is hoped that the housing situation will sufficiently improve in the future to eliminate many of these caravan dwellings.

Swimming Baths. During the year, 71 satisfactory samples of water were taken from public swimming baths and 24 obtained from school baths in the town. All the public swimming bath water samples were satisfactory. Three unsatisfactory reports were received in respect of an experimental swimming bath started during the year at one of the Primary Schools. Advice was given with regard to bath loading and method of chlorination which appears to have been successful in putting the trouble right. There are 5 schools in the town provided with swimming baths, 3 of which are provided with automatic chlorination plant. In the other 2 cases chlorination is carried out by means of hand dosing.

Drinking Water. 34 samples of water were obtained from private wells in the town which are used for drinking purposes. 5 samples were reported as unsatisfactory. Appropriate action was taken in these cases. 10 samples of water were obtained from the town's mains and submitted for examination. All were reported satisfactory.

4. GENERAL

Factories Acts, 1937-1948. There are 657 factories recorded in the register kept for this purpose. 516 visits were paid by the District Inspectors. These premises have been kept in a reasonably satisfactory manner during the year and requests by inspectors have, in the main, been promptly dealt with. 6 complaints were received from H.M. Inspector of Factories. It was necessary to serve 11 written notices during the year. The list of outworkers received twice yearly from employers in accordance with Section 110 of the Act, returned 65 outworkers who were principally engaged in making wearing apparel. Of these, 4 were referred to other Local Authorities and 61 were in the Borough and the premises were visited by the sanitary inspectors.

The work carried out by the District Sanitary Inspectors in their inspection of factories is for ensuring that the premises comply with the Factories Acts so far as the Local Authority's responsibilities extend, except in so far as means of escape in case of fire are concerned which is the responsibility of the Fire Brigade. Visits were also made to factories following complaints of nuisance which are dealt with under the Public Health Act. All plans of proposed factory and other buildings submitted to the Borough Council for approval under the Planning and Building Byelaws, are examined by this department from the point of view of the Factories Acts and Public Health Act, and especially from the point of view of potential nuisance. Canteens and kitchens, etc., which are now available in many factories, were also submitted to inspection by the District Sanitary Inspectors. The standard of hygiene observed in these establishments, together with the structure of kitchens and amenities provided therewith, were matters also under supervision. The tables shown below give details of inspections of factories and are the particulars contained in the annual return to the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

Premises	Number on Register	Inspec- tions	Number of Written Notices
Factories without mechanical power ...	130	102	1
Factories with mechanical power ...	527	414	10
	657	516	11

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found			
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Inspector	Referred by H.M. Inspector
Want of cleanliness ...	7	6	—	5
Sanitary Conveniences— (b) unsuitable or defective	8	8	—	1
	15	14	—	6

Rag Flock and other Filling Materials Act, 1951. There are 5 premises on the register where filling materials listed in Section 32 of the Act are used in the manufacture of bedding and other upholstered articles.

Eleven inspections were made of these premises and 11 samples of filling materials submitted for examination. All the samples were reported satisfactory.

Canal Boats. Forty-two visits were made to the wharves on the Thames and Kennet. It would appear that the use of canal boats has been discontinued in this area now that the Kennet and Avon canal is no longer a principal means of transport. No canal boats were seen during the year and there are none on the register.

Places of Entertainment. Eight visits were paid to the various places of public entertainment. There were no complaints by the public in respect of these establishments during the year.

Shops Acts. Visits were paid to all types of shops in the town as a routine duty. A number of inspections were also made on receipt of complaint from the Shops Act Inspector responsible for hours of closing, etc. In 2 cases certificates of exemption were granted in respect of sanitary accommodation and washing facilities.

Pet Animals Act, 1951. Seven licences were issued in 1955 under the above Act.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949. The work of rodent destruction continues to receive the close attention of the department. During the year 14,305 visits were made to premises in connection with the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949. 146 business premises and 465 private dwellings were found to be infested with rats or mice. Wherever practicable, surface infestations are dealt with by the

block system, which includes treatment of the sewers and private drains in the neighbourhood of the infestation. Where it was found that the primary cause of rat infestation was defective drains, representation was made to the owner concerned, and in 13 such cases, the drains were satisfactorily repaired. The main sewers were again systematically treated twice during the year in order to reduce rat population. The number of baits found untouched is evidence of the decreasing population in the sewers. The refuse tips in the town were treated regularly during the year.

Wherever it was necessary, proofing measures were recommended to the owners concerned, and some 29 premises, both business and private, were proofed during the year. Regular inspections have been made at the hospitals in the town ; generally, conditions have been found to be satisfactory, but wherever necessary treatment has been carried out.

A statistical summary of rodent control work is shown on page 105.

The treatment of domestic premises for rats and mice infestation is done free of charge, but payment is required when work is done in business establishments. During the financial year 1954-55 the income in respect of this work was £122.

Other Pests. In addition to the rodent control work carried out during the year, some 101 complaints were investigated concerning other pests including rabbits, moles, grey squirrels, badgers, bees, foxes, pigeons, wasps, etc. Some 69 cases of wasps' nests were dealt with, it being possible to remove the combs completely in 61 instances. The complaints received in respect of rabbits, few though they may be, indicate that the Myxomatosis has not completely rid the country of rabbits. It is understood that the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is asking for an all-out effort to clear up the odd pockets where rabbits are still found.

A persistent problem in the town is the nuisance caused by pigeons. There are two separate and distinct aspects to it. So far as the town pigeons are concerned these are usually the domestic pigeon gone " wild." They have established a number of colonies in suitable buildings where access is difficult. Since shooting is not possible in built-up areas advice has been given to the owners and occupiers of the premises involved suggesting trapping and proofing measures. In one or two parts the trouble is aggravated by well meaning citizens who make a practice of feeding these pests regularly. So long as there is a readily available food supply and suitable nesting places on buildings are left unfenced, the nuisance will be difficult to eliminate. During the year numerous pigeons were trapped and many eggs destroyed. The nuisance from wood pigeons in the outlying districts of the towns has been particularly severe this year, and appears to be a national problem. The pest officers in the adjoining county areas have been approached with a view to organised shoots being arranged on the outskirts of the Borough. Co-operation in this matter has been promised and it is expected that a number of shoots will be arranged in the near future.

RODENT CONTROL

	Private Dwellings	Business Premises including Food Stores and Kitchens	Sewer Maintenance Treatment (Manholes)	Refuse Tips	Corporation Property	Total
Complaints received ... 565	486	156	—	6	24	672
Complaints on Survey, etc. 107						
Visits	8,991	3,852	1,133	54	275	14,305
Premises found clear	50	6	282	—	—	338
Premises found infested	465	146	107	—	22	740
Number of Rats picked up ...	439	138	Nil	—	42	619
Estimated kill—Rats	805	281	81	40	94	1,301
Number of Mice picked up ...	275	236	—	—	16	527
Estimated kill—Mice	608	661	—	—	53	1,322

COLLECTION OF REFUSE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

Mr. K. H. Thorpe, Borough Engineer and Surveyor, has supplied the following information :—

HOUSE REFUSE COLLECTION

During 1955, the collection of house refuse has continued once weekly. The service is maintained by 13 house refuse collection vehicles and 52 employees.

The following table shows the quantity of house refuse collected from premises within the Borough with the total mileage of vehicles used in this collection :—

Quarter ending :	1955		1954	
	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>
31st March	9,255	29,392	8,107	28,014
30th June	8,977	28,242	8,437	28,070
30th September	8,521	28,065	8,316	30,005
31st December	7,669	29,135	8,474	30,068
Totals ...	34,442	114,834	33,334	116,157

Trade refuse is collected at the same time as domestic refuse and at such other times as arranged between the trader and the Corporation. Facilities are available for traders to deliver trade refuse direct to the Refuse Disposal Tip by arrangement with the Corporation.

KITCHEN WASTE

Householders are encouraged to keep kitchen waste separate from house refuse, and it is collected from street bins and over 3,500 individual containers. Waste food is also collected from restaurants, canteens and other catering establishments. All the waste food collected is processed in the Concentrator Plant and then sold to local pig and poultry keepers.

HOUSE REFUSE DISPOSAL

Controlled tipping on a modernised mechanical system was commenced on 14th February, 1955, at Hills Meadows and it is expected that tipping operations on this site will be completed in April, 1956 when normal tipping will then be resumed at the site situated on the banks of the Kennet and Avon Canal.

STREET CLEANSING

The "beat" system of street cleansing by street orderlies has been maintained and proves to be a satisfactory method. Collection of street refuse is carried out by means of street orderly trucks which are visited by street cleansing freighters for the collection of accumulated refuse.

The following is a comparative table of the number of employees engaged on street cleansing :—

			1955	1954
Men	...	...	36	40
Boys	...	...	2	1

The following table shows the quantity of street sweepings collected within the Borough and the mileage of the collection vehicles (the table includes figures for the two mechanical sweeper collectors).

Quarter ending :	1955		1954	
	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>
31st March	715	4,033	760	2,724
30th June	600	3,706	950	4,426
30th September	526	3,698	870	4,253
31st December	637	4,761	830	4,054
Totals ...	2,478	16,198	3,410	15,457

STREET GULLEY CLEANSING

8,021 street gullies were emptied and sealed with fresh water by mechanically operated vehicles.

The following table shows the comparative tonnage removed during the years 1954-1955 :—

Quarter ending :	1955		1954	
	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Miles</i>
31st March	428	1,962	496	2,666
30th June	491	2,066	388	1,954
30th September	287	1,120	515	2,274
31st December	312	1,330	613	2,635
Totals	1,518	6,478	2,012	9,529

CESSPOOL EMPTYING

All domestic cesspools are emptied by two mechanical cesspool emptying vehicles upon receipt-of instructions from occupiers or owners of premises, within the Borough, with a minimum of inconvenience and nuisance to householders.

MANOR FARM SEWAGE WORKS

The total volume of sewage treated during 1955, showed a further rise over previous years, for despite an exceptionally dry summer, the total volume treated was 2,026,000,000 gallons, i.e. some 5,550,000 gallons per day.

Although the flow of sewage has risen severely during the last three years the purification efficiency has not deteriorated any further, although of course the effluent was still usually "unsatisfactory" by the Thames Conservancy standards.

The construction programme for the new sewerage and sewage disposal works has been approved by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and the Consultant Engineers will now be able to prepare detailed plans and obtain tenders for the first contract. The whole programme is based upon a five year period to start on 1st October, 1956.

The perennial effort was made to mitigate aerial nuisance from the works ; the warm summer made this task even more difficult. During 1956 experimental

work will be carried out to determine the cost and efficacy of atomising odour counteractants into the air.

During the year some 3,000 cubic yards of dried sludge was lifted from the sludge drying beds and all of this was taken away by agricultural and horticultural users.

CAVERSHAM SEWAGE WORKS

Large volumes of sewage were again pumped from this works to Manor Farm to relieve the increasing load upon this plant. With the reduced load the final effluent was usually within the limits of impurity set by the Thames Conservancy.

SEWERAGE

During the twelve months ended 31st December, 1955, 673 houses, flats, etc., were connected to the foul sewerage system. Of these properties, 416 were new Corporation houses, 178 were private houses, 11 were additional flats (house conversions), 45 were existing houses previously drained to cesspools and 23 were houses outside the Borough. The number of houses having cesspool drainage is now 510 compared with 548 at the end of 1954.

Main foul drainage work during the year consisted of a 15-in. sewer in Hemdean Road and a 6-in. sewer in Cockney Hill.

SWIMMING AND SLIPPER BATHS

The slipper baths at Arthur Hill Memorial Baths and Jesse Terrace continue to be well patronised and the swimming pools were used to capacity during last summer.

HOUSING

(These comments should be read in conjunction with the report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector and the comments on housing of old people.)

Mr. C. H. R. Willett, Borough Architect, has been good enough to supply the following information :—

During the calendar year 1955, 416 dwellings of all kinds were taken over ; these included aged persons bungalows and maisonettes. The latter are usually erected in groups of four, two of them being upon the first floor and are usually occupied by active aged people.

The accommodation provided in the aged persons dwellings consists of a living room, separate bedroom, bathroom and a kitchen, together with a small store shed and fuel store.

A considerable number of flats have been erected using a part-prefabricated system of construction ; these flats contain a living room, two bedrooms, bathroom and a good kitchen as well as having an outside store and fuel store. They are apparently popular with tenants because it is really good accommodation at a low all-in rent.

Two-storey and three-storey houses continue to be built in numbers, both of traditional construction and of non-traditional, the latter being somewhat more rapidly produced though they are, of course, just as soundly built and just as well fitted. Their principal advantage lies in the fact that they do not require so much brickwork in their construction and since there is still a shortage of bricks at a reasonable price, it is essential to use other methods of construction so as to keep up the flow of houses.

Two of the new estates, namely the Valley Estate and Brockley Close, both in Tilehurst, will be completed within a few weeks.

Progress on the St. Michael's Estate is good, but there is still a labour shortage which prevents as much being done as could be wished.

There still remain one or two small sites on the St. Michael's main Estate, but these will be developed very soon. A start will shortly be made on the new extension of the St. Michael's Estate upon which some 230 dwellings will be built.

Very shortly, tenders will be received for the building of a new block of shops with maisonettes over, on the St. Michael's Estate, while other shops at Southcote Parade, Southcote Farm Lane, Bath Road Estate, are now ready for occupation. A large block of shops in Coronation Square, Bath Road Estate, has reached that stage where shop fronts will soon be installed. When finished, it is anticipated that these will be a very good modern example of a neighbourhood shopping centre.

Other schemes are in contemplation, including the erection of multi-storey flats and a lot more aged persons dwellings as well as the ordinary two-storey type dwelling.

During the course of the year a large turnover in re-let houses occurs and it would appear that there is a considerable movement amongst the Corporation's tenants. About 240 exchanges were effected during 1955 with, of course, Housing Committee approval.

Also during 1955 several hundred houses had electricity installed as part of the programme for installing electricity in all Corporation houses. The Corporation now owns well over 6,000 dwellings, equal to about one-fifth of the total dwelling accommodation of the Borough of Reading.

Very considerable maintenance work is undertaken each year. More than 1,000 houses annually are repainted externally. There is a constant renewal of fixtures and fittings amounting in value to more than £50,000 per annum.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948

Parts III & IV

SECTION 21—PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION

(a) **General Considerations.** In last year's Report, I referred to the fact that a special Liaison Committee had been set up between the Housing and Health Committees to keep under review the accommodation to be provided for old people. This Liaison Committee met on a number of occasions during the year and, amongst other things, recommended a special points scheme which would apply to applicants for old people's bungalows. I am pleased to report that during the year a number of these bungalows became available. It was agreed that approximately half of them should be reserved for direct transfers from Corporation Housing Estates and the other half for applicants who are living in non Corporation houses. Investigation of this latter group of applications was made by my Department.

Visits have been paid to the present homes of old people who have applied to the Council for rehousing so that the need of the 190 people on the register up to 31st December, 1954, could be assessed, with special reference to medical conditions of ill-health which might be aggravated by their present accommodation. It was revealed by this investigation that the actual numerical demand by old people for rehousing is less than the apparent demand, for 71 of these 190 no longer wished for, or were unsuitable for, a Corporation dwelling, the majority (60%) because circumstances had changed since they had first registered. Others had applied in good time for future retirement or because they feared eviction when the property they lived in changed hands (15%). The remainder were deferred for a variety of reasons.

The picture revealed by these 190 applicants is that the majority of applications come from single women or widows (128), comparatively few from married couples (62), and of these, 12 were found to be under pension age. Single women aged about 70 are often the old school of domestic servants used to residential employment from an early age.

One of the real needs emerging from these applications is for smaller accommodation, for many pensioners are occupying properties which suited them when they were younger, or their families were growing up, but which are now too big, too cold, too expensive, and involve too much work for an ageing person whose health is declining. Of the 190 investigated 53 were tenants of houses or flats and 12 were owner-occupiers. As tenants or owners the maintenance of the property (decorative or structural) is a great worry to the occupier whose income does not allow such expenditure. On the other hand there are approximately 65 properties deteriorating and not being used to the best advantage at a time of continuing shortage of family houses.

A continued examination of 85 applications made during 1955 reveals similar situations. Thirty-three of these were tenants of houses or flats or owner-occupiers. Six are living outside the Borough, 21 were deferred for reasons similar to the earlier applicants, and of the remainder only 4 could be counted as real medical cases.

Incapacity to cope with present housing accommodation on account of serious ill-health or other medical reasons were surprisingly few. Although there were many instances of ailments common to old age, one could not say that present housing accommodation was severely aggravating their condition, except perhaps bronchial/heart applicants having to carry water, slops, etc., up and down stairs, but there is much discomfort and unhappiness among applicants living in other people's houses.

There is a disturbing number of old people living without adequate warmth and cooking facilities. Coal fires are not always possible for pensioners because of the high price of fuel, lack of storage, and the difficulties of carrying fuel. Gas fires are found to be very expensive. One pensioner reported that to keep a large bed sitting room really warm with a gas fire would cost 3/- per day which was prohibitive. Oil stoves are used to a great extent as the only means of heating and very often as the only means of cooking also. Many pensioners spend much of the day in public restaurants, shops, libraries, etc., which are warm as an alternative to cheerless solitude in their rooms. Although pensioners are, on the whole, not big eaters, the diet that can be managed on one oil stove or gas ring is often inadequate and certainly monotonous.

Of the current applicants living in rooms, 14 only do not have the use of a cooking stove.

Sixteen applicants, especially single women or widows, have rooms in a house occupied by one other elderly person. This could be a very satisfactory arrangement if facilities were better but is often a source of much friction and unhappiness, because of the arrangements of the house. Many elderly women living on their own seem to desire only one room with adequate independent cooking arrangements, preferably in a house near the shops and centre of the town to keep down bus fares. There is perhaps a field here to explore for possible experimentation.

I am coming to the conclusion (this is a purely personal conclusion and not necessarily that of the Council) that arrangements should be made to facilitate the transfer of people to bungalows at a much earlier age than has been thought suitable up to the present. We have found that an appreciable number of the applicants have been unwilling to undergo the upset and trouble of a change of residence when the opportunity arose. I feel that it would be much better, and make better use of housing accommodation in the town as a whole, if people were allowed to occupy these bungalows when they have passed the age of 60. At that age they are still young enough to adapt themselves to new circumstances, to look after a garden of a reasonable size, and yet, at the same time will appreciate the reduction in the amount of housework. Their transfer will also release a larger house which could be used for a family with young children. This "under occupancy" of houses, both Corporation and non-Corporation, is becoming a marked feature of the housing position in Reading, as elsewhere.

(b) **Part III—Accommodation.** The demand for accommodation provided under Section 21 of the National Assistance Act shows no sign of abating; in fact, it would appear that an increasing number of old people, who remember the old restrictive practices of the Poor Law and have been reluctant in the past to leave their homes, are realising that they cannot look after themselves adequately and are seeking the type of accommodation the Council are now providing. Even when the present programme is completed, it would appear that we shall be short of our target of 350 beds, although this figure would seem to be a reasonable one.

The Committee concerned have, during the year, given consideration to a number of matters of administration that have arisen, and a reorganisation of the Administrative staff has been carried out. The Committee have also come to the conclusion that the provision of small mixed Homes is not an economic success; there is little fraternisation between the sexes, and the cost of this type of home with its duplication of staff is, of course, higher.

The Committee have also decided upon a policy of appointing a woman as Superintendent-Matron in charge of the Homes, and not making joint appointments. It is thought that a woman can more adequately take charge of the administration, secure the homely atmosphere that is aimed at, and can also better supervise the

domestic and cooking arrangements. Male officers are employed in the capacity of chief and ordinary attendants and handymen in Homes in which they are required.

Difficulty is still experienced in the recruitment of suitable staff. There are, naturally, in the early years of a scheme of this sort, few people with experience, and Homes are now being opened in increasing numbers throughout the country, with an ever-increasing demand on available experienced staff.

(c) **New Accommodation.** On the 20th January, 1955, His Worship the Mayor (Councillor A. E. Smith, J.P.) formally opened the Arthur Clark Home, which has accommodation for 20 female residents. This Home, which has only been opened on a short term basis, has proved to be a comfortable and easily worked house. Its position on a main bus route has been of great benefit to those residents who like an occasional visit to the town and shops.

The extension at Parkhurst is now nearing completion, and it is hoped that the first residents will be taking up their abode in this part of the building in May, 1956.

The Committee have decided to take over from the Children's Department, for a period of at least three years, a Home at Dysons Wood, Tokers Green, near Reading. This Home is very nicely situated, and is a little more than three miles from the centre of the town. It will provide for some 20 elderly women. Adaptations will not be considerable, and the plans are in active operation to furnish and equip this Home. Admission, it is hoped, will commence in July, 1956.

A specially built new Home, to be called the Alice Jenkins Home, to be erected in Liebenrood Road, is now well advanced in the planning stage. Unfortunately the project is held up as the result of the financial position which arose early in 1956.

This will complete the plans in the present programme.

(d) **Admissions and Discharges.** The following table gives the particulars of admissions during 1955

	Transfers from other Homes		Source of Admissions						Total	
			Hospital		Own Home		For Short Stay			
	M.	W.	M.	W.	M.	W.	M.	W.	M.	W.
“Woodlands”	1	4	9	10	4	4	1	—	15	18
“Wychcotes”	—	—	—	2	—	4	—	2	—	8
“Warren House”	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	0	—	4
“Southern Hill”	1	—	9	6	6	—	1	—	17	6
“Parkhurst”	1	—	7	—	5	—	1	—	14	—
“Arthur Clark” Home	—	6	—	5	—	20	—	2	—	33
	3	10	25	24	15	31	3	4	46	69
	13		49		46		7		115	

The total number of residents in Hostels on the 31st December, 1955, was as follows :—

				Nominal Accommodation		Actual Occupation	
				M.	F.	M.	F.
"Woodlands"	...	...	...	23	44	22	49
"Wychotes"	...	...	...	—	16	—	15
"Warren House"	...	...	...	—	19	—	23
"Parkhurst"	...	...	...	25	—	32	—
"Southern Hill"	...	...	...	18	28	31	21
"Arthur Clark" Home	...	...	...	—	20	—	20

Some concern has been shown throughout the country at the high proportion of admissions to Part III accommodation from hospitals, and various reasons have been put forward to explain this. It would appear that a number of old people are admitted to hospital, and, when ready for discharge in the normal way, are either not considered fit to return to live alone, or their relatives will not undertake further responsibility. It will be seen from the tables that a high proportion of the ordinary admissions to the hostels come from the various local hospitals. Unfortunately, these admissions are often in exchange for a Part III resident who requires hospital treatment.

(e) **Holidays for Residents of Hostels.** A scheme is in operation which enables residents of the Homes to have a short holiday by the sea. By arrangement with the various hotels at seaside resorts special terms are available, and for some years past Reading has arranged to send a party to a boarding house situated on the front at Southsea. All who have taken part in these holidays have expressed their appreciation for what has been done for them and there is no doubt that a number of residents look forward each year to this break in their routine. A number of elderly people from outside have also joined this party and every effort is made to accommodate any who have no other ways of arranging for a holiday.

(f) **Temporary Accommodation.** The following table gives brief particulars of the use of temporary accommodation at Woodlands during the year.

				M.	W.	C.	Total
Admissions	—	26	39	65
Maintenance Days	—	—	—	1,263
Remaining on 31st March, 1956	—	—	—	—

It will be seen that there has not been a great call on this provision during the year. Apart from homeless families, who are discussed subsequently, they were all women and children who came in for periods of a night or so.

Homeless Families. (This section should be read in conjunction with my comments on the work of the Family Caseworker under the National Health Service Act). The temporary accommodation at Woodlands was occupied for only six months of the year between April and September, but not during the winter months. Four mothers with their children stayed for periods of more than one week in 1955. The longest stay in Part III accommodation was 5½ months. The mother of this family was evicted from Council property together with her eight young children and her eldest daughter and her illegitimate child. This eviction was planned by agreement with the Housing Department, Treasurer's Department, Children's Department, N.S.P.C.C., and School Welfare Department. It was planned on account of the

appalling rent record of this family and the wilful damage to the property and generally poor example to the neighbourhood. The plan was that after a period in Part III accommodation the family should be rehoused in substandard property with a view to a promotion to better property if this was merited. Two of the children were cared for by private foster mothers found by the mother; three were cared for by the Children's Department at the request of the mother, and three accompanied her to Part III accommodation, together with her eldest daughter and illegitimate child. After 5½ months, this family was rehoused in substandard property. The Treasurer's Department report an improvement in rent payments in the district from which this family was moved. Unfortunately the woman herself has not improved her standards in the new accommodation. This was an interesting experiment and one which might, by its punitive nature, have succeeded with some families. The lack of success in the case of this particular family may be some indication that it is one of the small group of "hard-core problem families."

Another young mother was admitted to Woodlands with her three children after a month at a Mother and Baby convalescent home with her new-born baby. She was rehoused after three months. She has worked very hard in her home and made great preparations for the return of her husband from prison. The husband is now in regular work.

At one period in the summer there were three mothers sharing the hut together with their eight children. One family arrived by train from London and there was some difficulty in getting them to return.

There is still a great keenness to get into Part III accommodation as a short cut to obtaining a Council House, though there is undoubtedly much difficulty and unhappiness caused by accommodation problem. The Caseworkers are used, to some extent, as an accommodation bureau by other departments and agencies. Eighty-six such enquiries were dealt with in 1955, some of which meant a great deal of time and work to prevent the families becoming homeless.

Contact is maintained with a proportion of the seven families re-housed from Part III accommodation over the past three years. Most of these appear to be satisfactory tenants but two or three still require supervision. Where an evicted family is the type where there is always a danger of breakup within itself, it is possible that Part III accommodation, necessitating the husband's residence elsewhere, precipitates the situation as well as complicating the family finances on account of separation. As this puts a double strain on families least able to bear it, residence in Part III accommodation for the families' sake should be as brief as possible.

SECTION 22—CHARGES FOR ACCOMMODATION

The standard charge for the year was £5 2s. 6d. per head per week. The following amounts were recovered on assessments made against residents according to the scale in use at the present time :—

			£	s.	d.
" Woodlands "	...	...	5,898	9	5
" Wychcotes " ...	...	...	1,160	7	2
" Warren House "	...	...	1,797	10	9
" Parkhurst " ...	...	...	2,497	0	0
" Southern Hill "	...	...	4,385	10	1
"Arthur Clark" Home	...	...	1,524	13	11
			<hr/>		
			£17,263	11	4
			<hr/>		

SECTION 24—AUTHORITY LIABLE FOR THE PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION

A number of cases have been dealt with under this Section, but all have been amicably arranged between the various authorities and there has been no need for any reference to the Ministry of Health during the year.

SECTION 25—POWER OF NATIONAL ASSISTANCE BOARD TO ORDER THE PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION IN URGENT CASES

Relationship with the National Assistance Board has again been entirely satisfactory, and the officers of both Departments are in close co-operation and have been able to assist one another in providing accommodation in any cases that have arisen.

SECTION 26—PROVISION OF ACCOMMODATION IN PREMISES MAINTAINED BY VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

The demand for specialised Homes continues, and the numbers chargeable to the County Borough continue to grow. There is no doubt that with severely physically handicapped persons a specialised Home is the only satisfactory method of providing the necessary accommodation where they can obtain proper care and attention in accordance with their needs. During the year the British Red Cross Society have opened a Home at Shiplake—the Andrew Duncan House—for young, permanently disabled women and we were fortunate in being able to obtain a bed for a woman who had been on the waiting list for a considerable time. The number of cases chargeable at the present time are as follows :—

	M.	F.
Aged Infirm ...	1	6
Blind ...	3	5
Cripples ...	—	3
Deaf and Dumb ...	1	—
Epileptic ...	1	2
Spastic ...	1	—
	7	16

SECTION 29—WELFARE OF HANDICAPPED PERSONS

(a) **Deaf and Dumb.** Our arrangements with the Oxford Diocesan Association for the Deaf and Dumb continued to operate satisfactorily throughout the year. The following table gives particulars of the Register on 31st December, 1955 :

	M.	F.
Children under 16	9	6
Persons aged 16-64	30	39
Persons aged 65 & over	4	5
	43	50

Mr. C. Powell, the Missioner, reports as follows on his work during the year :—

Religious. Church Services have been conducted on each Sunday throughout the year.

Holy Communion Services have been conducted by visiting priests, the service being interpreted.

The Harvest Festival Service held on 16th October, when some 63 deaf persons were present.

Wedding, Baptismal and Funeral Services have been interpreted.

Mothers' Union. Fortnightly meetings have been held during the year. At such meetings, the members have made articles for the Sale of Work held on 3rd December.

The Branch took part in the Deanery Outing to Chichester. It has also attended M.U. Services of other branches.

Placement. During the year there have been 17 placings, 9 male and 8 female. The jobs range from carpenters, laundry work, building trade, boot and shoe making and repairing, tailoring, bakery, engineering.

Social. 1st January, a party was given by the Mothers' Union for deaf children. Some 27 deaf children were present, each receiving a gift.

The Annual Tea Party was held in the Reading Town Hall on 15th January, when the Mayor and Mayoress sat down to tea.

The Regular members' party, given free by the Deaf Social Club held in St. John's Institute on 17th December.

During the year visits in form of coach outings took place to Newbury Deaf Party, Woking Deaf Club, Bristol Deaf Club.

Visits were received from Woking Deaf Club, Bath Deaf Club, and Walthamstow Deaf Club.

A Sports Rally was held at High Wycombe on 25th June, when Reading Centre won the challenge cup.

Sporting Events. Two Billiard teams took part in the Reading Tuesday Billiard League.

Four teams took part in the Reading and District Table Tennis League. One team won the championship cup.

During the summer, a cricket team played in the Reading Cricket League.

The Centre has played numerous friendly games with various clubs.

Welfare. A party of 9 old deaf persons were sent on a week's holiday to Margate.

The deaf have been visited in their homes and in their places of employment.

Interpretation has been given in court, hospitals, solicitors' offices, police stations, doctors' surgeries, etc. Help has been given to the deaf in all kind of matters.

(b) **Hard of Hearing.** I am sorry to have to report that Miss Foad has had to resign from the secretaryship of the Association. Her successor, Mrs. I. Coles, has been good enough to supply the following information :—

" I think 1955 has been a busy and successful year. A Samaritan Fund was started whereby we try to keep in touch and visit any sick members, and take them flowers or fruit, etc. It does cheer people when sick to know that the club has not forgotten them.

We held a lipreading competition ; the cup (to be held for one year) was won by Mrs. Brown of 5 St. Bartholomew's Road, Reading. Unfortunately at the moment we have no lipreading teacher but we try to get in some practice—members helping one another.

We now have a small library, which is proving very popular.

We have formed a Building Fund. This is an ambitious plan for a place of our own one day. Much thought, time, and hard work will be needed for this but if all members pull their weight it should be realised one day."

The register at 31st December, 1955, was as follows :—

	M.	F.
Children under 16 ...	21	16
Persons aged 16-64	20	52
Persons aged 65 and over	9	20
Total	138	

(c) **Blind.** The Blind Welfare Officer, Miss Lowe, who acts as secretary of the Reading Association for the Welfare of the Blind, reports as follows :—

Register of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons. On 31st December, 1955, there were 232 blind people on the register, 94 males and 138 females. The age groups are as follows :—

				Male	Female	Total
Under 1 year	...	...	...	—	—	—
1-4 years	...	...	...	—	1	1
5-15 „	...	...	...	1	—	1
16-20 „	...	...	...	3	1	4
21-30 „	...	...	...	4	2	6
31-39 „	...	...	...	5	3	8
40-49 „	...	...	...	8	8	16
50-64 „	...	...	...	18	29	47
65 years and over	...	...	...	55	94	149
				94	138	232

Age at which Blindness occurred

				Male	Female	Total
Under 1 year	...	...	...	10	13	23
1-4 years	...	...	...	—	3	3
5-15 „	...	...	...	5	2	7
16-20 „	...	...	...	4	2	6
21-30 „	...	...	...	6	3	9
31-39 „	...	...	...	5	10	15
40-49 „	...	...	...	9	12	21
50-64 „	...	...	...	19	35	54
65 years and over	...	...	...	36	58	94
				94	138	232

During the year there were 18 new registrations, 3 transfers in, 24 deaths and 5 transfers out to other areas, resulting in a decrease of 8 on the total for 1954. Of the 18 persons registered blind during the year 13 were over 70 years of age, 3 were over 60 years, 1 aged 47 years and 1 boy of 15 who had been living in Australia.

Partially Sighted Register. There are 80 persons on this register at the end of the year, 29 males and 51 females. The age groups are as follows :—

				Male	Female	Total
Under 5 years	...	...	...	—	1	1
5-15 „	...	...	...	3	3	6
16-20 „	...	...	...	—	2	2
21-49 „	...	...	...	4	7	11
50-64 „	...	...	...	3	5	8
65 and over	...	...	...	19	33	52
				29	51	80

During the year there were 16 additions to the register including 1 boy aged 7 who had been registered blind but whose sight improved after surgical treatment ;

1 person left the district and 1 died resulting in a total increase of 14 on the total for 1954 ; 5 other people had eye-tests, 3 of whom were previously registered as partially-sighted and they remain the same ; 2 examined for the first time were not admitted to the register.

The Register is divided into the following groups for those aged 16 and over :—

Persons near and prospectively blind	...	...	10
Persons mainly industrially handicapped	...	...	9
Persons requiring observation only	...	...	54

A. Follow-up of Registered Blind and Partially Sighted Persons :—

(1) Number of cases registered during the year in respect of which para. 7 (c) of Forms B.D.8 recommends :—	Cause of Disability			
	Cataract	Glaucoma	Retrolental Fibroplasia	Others
(a) No treatment... ..	5	—	—	11
(b) Treatment (Medical, Surgical or Optical) ...	10	4	—	4
(2) Number of cases at (1) (b) above which on follow-up action have received treatment	3	2	—	2

B. Ophthalmia neonatorum

(1) Total number of cases notified during the year	1
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Children. The registered blind children are both away from home in establishments run by the Royal National Institute for the Blind. The little girl is at the Sunshine Home, East Grinstead and the boy is a pupil at Condover Hall, Shrewsbury.

There are 7 partially-sighted children. One little girl is going to a normal primary school when she is five to see how she gets on. Application has been made for 2 boys to go to a partially-sighted school and another has just left on passing the eleven-plus examination and is attending an ordinary grammar school. The 3 other girls are away at partially-sighted schools.

Home Workers. Our basket-maker died during the year just as he was on the point of retiring from full-time work and there are now two only, a machine knitter and a piano tuner. They are supervised by the Royal London Society for the Blind who furnish reports of their average earnings. The Council approved the revised augmentation rates for Home Workers, namely maximum amounts of £3 per week for men and £2 10s. for women and these have been paid since 1st April, 1955.

Rehabilitation and Training. Four people have had rehabilitation courses. One woman had a social course at Manor House, Torquay, and a man had a similar course at The Kathleen Chambers Home for the Deaf-Blind, Burnham-on-Sea. Two men went to Torquay for industrial rehabilitation sponsored by the Ministry of Labour. One was able to return to his former employment as a music-master but the other is still unemployed though his former employer has promised to review his case when the further surgical treatment for his eye has been completed. All four thoroughly enjoyed the course and felt greatly benefited by it.

A boy completed his training as a basket-maker but felt he would prefer other work if it could be found, preferably something to do with a hospital. He has been successfully placed as an orderly in the physiotherapy department of a local hospital and is reported to be doing very well.

A girl who has been doing a course of machine knitting at the Royal School for the Blind, Leatherhead, was discharged as she has proved too slow for the work and is unable to reach the standard required for a homemaker. She has since tried two domestic jobs which she thought she could manage but her work has not been satisfactory to the employers.

A girl who left school at Christmas is anxious to work in a shop and her headmaster thinks she will be able to manage this provided very acute sight is not required.

A newly-registered boy, aged 16 years, has been accepted for admission to the Royal National Institute's Centre for adolescents to be opened at Hethersett, Reigate, in January, 1956.

Employed Persons. Twenty-one blind persons and eight partially sighted are employed as masseurs, shorthand-typists, telephone operators, factory operatives, domestic workers, etc. One is a music master and two are employed by the R.N.I.B. No one capable of work is unemployed.

There are twenty men under 65 of whom nineteen are not capable of work and one is not available and of the twenty-two women not working eight are not capable and fourteen are not available. One-hundred and sixty-one registered blind persons are of retirement age.

The National Library and Talking Book Library. Readers of Braille or Moon embossed type enjoy receiving their books from the National Library. Cost of membership is covered for them by the Council's subscription to the Library. New readers begin by reading books in this Association's library, chiefly short stories and monthly magazines.

Three more electric talking book machines have been delivered to us this year and these have been allocated to three people who are greatly appreciating having books read to them.

Winter Coal. The Voluntary Association were again able to give all the blind people a gift of coal this winter, ranging from 2 cwts. each to the younger ones to 10 cwts. to those over 70 years of age. These gifts of coal are always very much appreciated and the committee feel it is one of the best ways of helping them.

Holiday Fund. Sixty-one saved up for their holidays during the year and a total of £200 was paid out in bonus and towards the cost of fares.

Shop Sales. The amount from shop sales totals £301, a slight decrease on last year's figure. In the early part of the year sales were slow but increased later on and we are trying to maintain this improvement by producing articles of a higher standard and studying the customers' requirements.

The Council helped to reduce our stock of men's socks by having two dozen pairs for the old men in the hostels.

Social Activities. The weekly Pastime Classes have continued throughout the year. The men's basket class meets on Mondays and Thursdays (morning and

afternoon on each day) and the women's class on Monday afternoon. Wednesday afternoon is devoted to games, dominos and lexicon proving the most popular.

The monthly social club has increased its membership and we are indebted to the members of the Round Table and Toc H for providing transport for this.

During the summer outings were arranged to Bournemouth and Southsea and half-day trips to Wallingford, London Airport and to Basildon at the invitation of the Women's Institute. The Garden Party was held in the grounds of Parkhurst Hostel and the warden, staff and residents all helped to make an enjoyable afternoon for the blind people. The Mayor and members of the Committee went round talking to them and joined in the competitions and side-shows.

We are indebted to a number of people and firms who render service to the blind folk of this County Borough in many and various ways, all of which help to make life easier and brighter for them and for which they are very thankful.

(c) REPORT OF CONSULTING OPHTHALMIC SURGEON

Mr. G. T. Willoughby Cashell, F.R.C.S., has given the following report in connection with the work he has undertaken during the year :—

During 1955, 39 patients, as compared with 53 in 1954, were examined for admission to the Blind Register. Four of these had been previously examined.

	Blind	Not Blind	Partially Sighted	Total
Cataract	—	1	11	12
Glaucoma	2	—	2	4
Myopia	3	—	—	3
Retinal Conditions... ..	2	—	—	2
Congenital Conditions ...	3	1	5	9
Infective Conditions ...	—	—	1	1
Degenerative Conditions ...	7	—	1	8
	17	2	20	39

Ages.

Under 20	20-30	40-50	50-60	60-70	70-80	80-90
4	2	2	1	4	13	13

Cataract. It is interesting that no one was certified as blind from cataract in 1955. Of the partially sighted patients under this heading 3 had had cataract extraction, 1 attaining 6/12 partly vision in the operated eye, another only 6/24 in one eye and 4/60 in the other due to diabetic retinopathy and the third had died since operation. One case was complicated by neuro-paralytic keratitis. Three patients having only one eye wished to defer operation as long as possible. One patient with a cataract in one eye and absolute glaucoma in the other and a second patient with

poor general health were also deferred. One patient was quite unfit for surgery and one had been put on the waiting list for operation.

Glaucoma. One of the patients certified blind had no perception of light in either eye due to untreated chronic glaucoma. The other patient had lost one eye due to a war injury. Of the partially sighted patients one had lost one eye from absolute glaucoma, the glaucomatous condition in the other eye having been controlled by surgery.

Myopia. Of the three patients under this heading one had macula degeneration, one had retinal haemorrhage and the third cataract in one eye and a detached retina in the other.

Retinal Conditions. These patients were blind from retinopathy caused in one case by hypertension and in the other by diabetes.

Congenital Conditions. Two of the blind patients had bilateral macula colobomata. One of these patients had cataract in addition and was not willing for operation. The third, a boy of 15, had nystagmus due to macula degeneration.

Two of the partially sighted patients, both children, had had their vision improved by operation on congenital cataract, one little boy having been transferred from the Blind to the Partially Sighted Register. The third patient had bilateral macula abiotrophy, the fourth was a child with nystagmus possibly with an element of albinism and the fifth was probably suffering from Stargaart's disease of the macula with poor prognosis. The patient who was not blind had normal vision in one eye and hand movements in the other due to amblyopia caused by a squint.

Infective Conditions. The patient under this heading had lost one eye from an infected corneal ulcer and had bilateral VIth Nerve paresis following hemiplegia.

Degenerative Conditions. Senile macula degeneration accounted for the blindness of the 7 patients under this heading. The partially sighted patient was also suffering from this condition.

(d) OTHER CLASSES OF HANDICAPPED PERSONS

The following table gives particulars of the composition of the Register and the type of assistance given to certain cases :—

Total number on Register ... 158 Total number assisted ... 93

	Male	Female
Children under 16 ...	2	5
Persons 16-64 ...	46	33
Persons 65 and over	5	2
	<hr/>	
Total	53	40
	<hr/>	

<i>Detail of type of Assistance provided</i>	<i>Number of Cases</i>
Appliances (Nursing equipment, aids, gadgets)	6
Alterations—Indoor and outdoor	14
Handicraft Instruction	29
Accommodation (Hostels, Homes)	4
" " " pending	1
Employment and training	9
Referred to other Agencies (D.R.O., British Red Cross, etc.) ...	18
Transport	4
Rehoused	4
" pending	2
Convalescence	2
" Arrangements made for other Agencies ...	3
Financial help—Miscellaneous (fares, raw materials supplied, etc.)	6
Welfare Visits (general advice)	29

Classification of Disabilities

A/E	6
F	18
G	7
H/L	13
Q/T	7
V	43
U/W	3
X	4
Y	3
Z	8

Grouping

A	10
B	18
C	4
D	55
E	8

Mrs. Janet Snow, who is a trained hospital almoner, continued to act as Welfare Officer for this particular section of the department. In my Report for 1954 I reported our decision to proceed cautiously in order to avoid disappointment to the handicapped persons who applied for help. I am sure that this decision has been justified but I am equally sure that this work is bound to expand although the expansion must be controlled for reasons of finance and lack of trained personnel. Indeed we note that more cases are now being referred for specific help rather than general welfare. It will be noted that the larger number of persons referred for help, are in the middle age group and therefore with a longer period of incapacity ahead to be overcome. The aim of the department must be to produce independence in the disabled person and to encourage the ability to attend to his domestic, personal and employment needs—in other words, to lead as normal a life as possible. This is achieved by supplying aids and gadgets to compensate for a limb deficiency; invalid chairs and hand rails to make movement possible indoors; ramps outside to make easy access to a house and in exceptional cases of disablement, rehousing to a single level specially adapted dwelling.

But any degree of success can only be achieved by the enormous efforts which these severely handicapped people make themselves. One must pay tribute to the

considerable courage and patience with which so many of them tackle their difficulties and the good humoured way in which they try and solve their problems.

Again we have worked closely with the Appliance Section of the Ministry of Health and have co-operated in the placing of garages for invalid carriages and in the preparation of the ground sites. This latter work is becoming increasingly costly particularly where considerable labour and materials are needed to overcome material obstacles. In only one instance has any contribution towards this expenditure been received from the patient.

The greater number of cases are referred by the hospitals. An effort is made to contact all patients discharged with a physical disability. Many of these are attending the Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy departments and on completion of hospital treatment are referred to this department. It is hoped that the services of a part-time handicraft teacher, who has been helping many of these people both in their homes and at special classes to which they come, will be extended. With the appointment of a full time Occupational Therapist a more extensive programme of Therapy and diversionary activity could be prepared and many people, at present home bound, would be able to join this group several times a week. It could also mean that many of the gadgets necessary for daily needs could be made in this department and readily available to doctors, district nurses, etc., for the assistance of their patients.

I must take this opportunity of expressing my great thanks to the many other agencies and Corporation departments which have helped us with this branch of our work. Particularly would I like to mention the British Red Cross Society, the Reading Dispensary Trust, and my colleague the Borough Architect, whose department has co-operated in an admirable way in effecting the various necessary alterations to Corporation houses which have been required in order to meet the particular requirements of handicapped persons.

SECTION 31—MEALS FOR OLD PEOPLE

The following table gives the number of meals supplied by the W.V.S. during the year :—

January	...	...	...	651
February	...	...	...	843
March	...	...	...	1,062
April	...	...	...	850
May	...	...	...	1,008
June	...	...	...	1,025
July	...	...	...	861
August	...	...	...	856
September	...	...	...	865
October	...	...	...	782
November	...	...	...	954
December	...	...	...	573
				<hr/> 10,330 <hr/>

I must again pay tribute to the energy and keenness with which the W.V.S. have done this work. In response to our request they have increased the number of meals, not only so far as number of recipients is concerned but also the number of deliveries per week. We were pleased to be able to make arrangements for them to receive a certain number of insulated food containers and it is hoped to increase this number during 1956. It must also be reported that Domestic Helps supplied on an average just under 1,000 meals per week to people in their own homes.

SECTION 37—REGISTRATION OF HOMES FOR OLD PEOPLE

At the end of the year there were 10 such Homes registered in Reading with a total of 101 beds.

SECTION 47—REMOVAL TO SUITABLE PREMISES OF PEOPLE IN NEED OF CARE AND ATTENTION

The Department has, of course, had a number of extremely difficult cases to deal with during the past year but it has not been necessary to take action in the Courts as allowed for under this Section.

SECTION 50—BURIAL OR CREMATION OF THE DEAD

During the year there have been 8 burials (6 males, 2 females) and 6 cremations (5 males, 1 female).

A considerable portion of the cost has been recovered from estates, and a great deal of work has been involved under this Section in dealing with estates of deceased persons, tracing relatives, and making application for the recovery of expenses.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Cremation. The Medical Officer of Health is the Medical Referee to Reading Crematorium. The following table gives an idea of the steady increase in the number of cremations over the last twelve years :—

1955	...	...	...	...	992
1954	...	...	...	...	869
1953	...	...	...	...	891
1952	...	...	...	...	675
1951	...	...	...	...	763
1950	...	...	...	...	576
1949	...	...	...	...	524
1948	...	...	...	...	444
1947	...	...	...	...	407
1946	...	...	...	...	344
1945	...	...	...	...	378
1944	...	...	...	...	346

38.9% of the cremations were borough residents and 61.1% came from outside the borough. It will be seen that 386 of the 1,352 borough deaths (29%) were cremated.

Public Health Laboratory Service. The valuable work of the Public Health Laboratory continued throughout the year and I am very grateful to Dr. Wood, Director of the Reading Laboratory, for his help and co-operation on many occasions. Unfortunately, it is not possible to present particulars of examinations which applied only to Reading.

Nursing Homes. At the end of the year 7 nursing homes were registered providing accommodation for 31 maternity patients and 55 others. All homes were inspected during the year.

Nursery and Child Minders Act, 1948. At the end of the year there were 3 child minders registered in the town in respect of 48 children. There is nothing special to report under this heading.

International Certificates. During the year 460 International Certificates of vaccination were authenticated.